

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 22 January 2013 at 18:30.

Agenda

The meeting will be preceded by a Prayer to be offered by the Mayor's Chaplain.

- 1 To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11 December 2012 (attached).
- 2 To report any apologies for absence.
- 3 To receive any communications.
- 4 Declaration of Interests. To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The usual declarations made at meetings of Full Council are shown in the attachment.
- 5 To receive questions from Taunton Deane Electors under Standing Order 15.
- 6 To receive any petitions or deputations from Taunton Deane Electors under Standing Orders 16 and 17.
- 7 Contract Procedure Rules. Report of the Monitoring Officer (attached).
- 8 Members' Allowances 2013/2014.
To receive recommendations from the independent Members' Allowances Panel (attached)
- 9 To receive the following recommendations from the Executive:-

Councillor Williams - Recommendations relating to:-

(a) Council Tax Base 2013/2014 (attached);

(b) Business Rates Retention and National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 2013/2014 (attached). An appendix to this recommendation can be found on pages 62-63;

(c) Corporate Business Plan 2013/2014 to 2015/2016 (attached). An appendix to this recommendation can be found on pages 64-106;

Councillor Edwards - Recommendation relating to the Introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in Taunton Deane (attached). An appendix to this recommendation can be found on pages 107-112.

Tonya Meers
Legal and Democratic Services Manager

05 March 2013

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions.

There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions.

Speaking under “Public Question Time” is limited to 4 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate.

If a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chairman will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

This is more usual at meetings of the Council’s Planning Committee and details of the “rules” which apply at these meetings can be found in the leaflet “Having Your Say on Planning Applications”. A copy can be obtained free of charge from the Planning Reception Desk at The Deane House or by contacting the telephone number or e-mail address below.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room.

Full Council, Executive, Committees and Task and Finish Review agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk



Lift access to the John Meikle Room and the other Committee Rooms on the first floor of The Deane House, is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available off the landing directly outside the Committee Rooms.



An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter.

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Corporate Support Unit on 01823 356414 or email r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Council Members:-

Councillor L Lisgo, MBE (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor T Hall (Mayor of Taunton Deane)
Councillor J Adkins
Councillor J Allgrove
Councillor J Baker
Councillor A Beaven
Councillor C Bishop
Councillor R Bowrah, BEM
Councillor S Brooks
Councillor N Cavill
Councillor S Coles
Councillor B Denington
Councillor D Durdan
Councillor K Durdan
Councillor M Edwards
Councillor H Farbahi
Councillor M Floyd
Councillor E Gaines
Councillor A Govier
Councillor J Govier
Councillor K Hayward
Councillor R Henley
Councillor C Herbert
Councillor C Hill
Councillor M Hill
Councillor J Horsley
Councillor J Hunt
Councillor L James
Councillor R Lees
Councillor S Lees
Councillor J Meikle, MBE
Councillor N Messenger
Councillor I Morrell
Councillor M Mullins
Councillor B Nottrodt
Councillor U Palmer
Councillor H Prior-Sankey
Councillor D Reed
Councillor J Reed
Councillor S Ross
Councillor T Slattery
Councillor G Slattery
Councillor F Smith
Councillor P Smith
Councillor V Stock-Williams
Councillor P Stone
Councillor B Swaine
Councillor P Tooze
Councillor J Warmington

Councillor P Watson
Councillor E Waymouth
Councillor D Webber
Councillor A Wedderkopp
Councillor D Wedderkopp
Councillor J Williams - Leader of the Council
Councillor G Wren

Taunton Deane Borough Council

At a meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 11 December 2012 at 6.30 pm.

Present The Mayor (Councillor Hall)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Ms Lisgo)
Councillors Mrs Adkins, Mrs Allgrove, Mrs Baker, Beaven, Bishop, Bowrah, Brooks, Cavill, Coles, Denington, D Durdan, Ms Durdan, Edwards, Farbahi, Mrs Floyd, Gaines, A Govier, Hayward, Henley, Mrs Herbert, C Hill, Mrs Hill, Horsley, Hunt, Miss James, R Lees, Mrs Lees, Meikle, Mrs Messenger, Morrell, Mullins, Nottrodt, Ms Palmer, Prior-Sankey, Mrs Reed, Gill Slattery, T Slattery, Mrs Smith, P Smith, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stone, Swaine, Tooze, Mrs Warmington, Watson, Mrs Waymouth, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp, Williams and Wren

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held on 2 October 2012, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

2. Apologies

Councillors Mrs Govier, D Reed and Ross.

3. Declaration of Interests

Councillors A Govier, Henley and Mrs Waymouth declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillors Brooks, Prior-Sankey and D Wedderkopp declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council and personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item 11 (iv) (a) as a family member was either in receipt of, or in the process of applying for, Council Tax Benefit. Councillors Mrs Hill and Mrs Smith declared personal interests as employees of Somerset County Council. Councillor Wren declared personal interests as an employee of Natural England and as Clerk to Milverton Parish Council. Councillor Hayward declared a personal interest as one of the Council's representatives on the Somerset Waste Board. Councillor Nottrodt declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillor Tooze declared a personal interest as an employee of the UK Hydrographic Office. Councillors D Durdan and Stone declared prejudicial interests as Tone Leisure Board representatives. Councillor Swaine declared a personal interest as a part-time swimming instructor. Councillor Mullins declared a personal interest as EDF Energy at Hinkley Point was his employer. Gill Slattery declared personal interests as a member of the Board of Governors at Somerset College and a Patron of the Supporters of Taunton Women's Aid. Councillor Farbahi declared a personal interest as a local owner of land in Taunton Deane. Councillors R Lees, Mrs Messenger and Mrs Warmington declared personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item 11 (iv) (a) as a family member was either in receipt of, or in the process of applying for, Council Tax Benefit. Councillor Coles declared a

personal interest in agenda item 11 (iii) (a) as he was a member of Somerset County Cricket Club.

4. **Somerset Armed Forces Community Covenant**

Councillor Bowrah reported that in July, Councillor Williams, along with the other partner representatives, officially signed the Somerset Armed Forces Community Covenant at a ceremony at RAF Yeovilton.

The Somerset Armed Forces Community was made up of both the serving and former members of the Armed Forces, including Territorial and Volunteer Reserve Forces and their families, who were working and residing in Somerset.

The Covenant had been made between the Armed Forces and a number of partners including the six Somerset Councils, the Local Health Authority, the Business Community, local education interests, the Charitable and Voluntary Sector and Religious Communities.

It was a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community which sought to complement the National Armed Forces Covenant.

The purpose of the Somerset Community Covenant was to encourage support for the Services Community and recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Community.

For Taunton Deane, the Covenant presented an opportunity to bring knowledge, experience and expertise, to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of our Armed Forces Community. It would encourage the integration of Service life into civilian communities and also offered the opportunity for members of the Armed Forces Community to help their local community.

The supporting objectives of the Covenant's continuing work plan would include, but were not limited to, the following:-

- To monitor the changing military footprint within Somerset;
- To establish the economic contribution of the military to the County;
- To identify community building projects for the military community;
- To identify opportunities for projects, which would enhance closer integration between civilian and military communities in Somerset;
- To assist the realignment of and access to, services which met the changing needs of the military, their families and veterans;

- To ensure that Somerset remained an attractive county for long-term investment by the Ministry of Defence (MoD); and
- To create an imaginative and practical educational and training scheme for veterans and their families to encourage productive re-settlement in Somerset.

Taunton Deane was looking to further enhance our relationship with the local Armed Forces and reservists, through our Human Resources (HR), Housing and Benefit departments, as well as building on the already strong relationships built with them over many years, through the Civic Office.

Councillor Bowrah went on to say that ex-service employees were automatically reservists, who could be called up at any time up to the age of 55. However there was currently no way of monitoring how many reservists or ex-service employees there were at Taunton Deane Borough Council, nor was there any system of encouraging employees to join the Territorial Army or Reserve Forces.

HR was considering what we should do now regarding this, what we had been asked to sign up to and also to have a full understanding of the MoD consultation taking place with employers, on changes to all of the arrangements contained in Employment Law Bulletin 595.

In the very near future, the Government would be stating the future position of our Armed Forces which could very well have a sizeable impact on Taunton Deane, regarding housing, employment and other services.

Councillor Bowrah concluded by reporting that 40 Commando RM would be exercising their right to “March Through” Taunton when they returned from their current tour of duty in Afghanistan in May next Year and the Rifles, who had also previously been awarded the Freedom of Taunton, were planning an event later in 2013.

He thanked Councillors for listening.

5. **Motion – Parking and Public Transport in Taunton**

Moved by Councillor Horsley and seconded by Councillor Coles.

“This Council fully supports the drive to ensure the long term viability of the Taunton Town Centre Shopping Area and to resist measures to encourage out of town shopping applications in accordance with the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan and the recently adopted Core Strategy.

The Council also notes that in the past three years it has closed Greenbrook Terrace, Castle Green, parts of Coal Orchard, Castle Street and Enfield Car Parks with the loss of 361 car parking spaces most completely or partially zoned for shopping in the town centre. In addition it has lost part of the Priors Bridge Road Car Park to office development with a further 264 spaces going.

In conjunction with Somerset County Council, it has provided two Park and Ride sites at Silk Mills to the West and at junction 25 of the M5 to the East.

This Council notes that traffic congestion in the town centre has increased significantly over the past few weeks and delays in movement are reducing footfall in the town centre. The lack of electronic signing about availability of car parking spaces for shoppers adds to the disquiet for the town centre retailers. The retailers are equally vociferous about the extra distance shoppers now have to walk to reach their destinations following the closures mentioned above damaging their businesses.

This Council therefore urges Somerset County Council to:-

- (a) Open its Park and Ride on Sundays in the period up to Christmas 2013;
- (b) To permit bus pass users to travel free from the Park and Ride sites to compete with Exeter and similar venues around the region; and
- (c) Introduce as quickly as possible electronic signing of availability of parking spaces on the main arterial routes into Taunton.

Furthermore, to enhance the encouragement of shoppers to come to Taunton, it urges the Council to adopt immediately the discount equivalent to three hours free parking for those customers who spend up to £20 in selected stores in the town centre as already negotiated with Debenhams and to extend this system as widely as possible. It urges the Council to allocate an officer to devote time immediately to address these issues especially the introduction of the discount scheme for shoppers parking in the town centre.”

During the discussion of this motion, Councillor Mrs Hill proposed, and Councillor Mrs Floyd seconded that sub- paragraph (a) above be amended to read “Open its Park and Ride on Sundays and on Thursday late shopping nights in the period up to Christmas 2013”.

The amendment was accepted by the mover and seconder of the motion

The mover and seconder of the motion requested that a formal roll call of votes be taken and recorded in the Minutes in accordance with Standing Order 18(2).

The motion was put and was lost with twenty five Councillors voting in favour of the amendment and twenty six Councillors voting against, as follows:-

Yes	No
Councillor Mrs Baker	Councillor Mrs Adkins
Councillor Brooks	Councillor Mrs Allgrove
Councillor Coles	Councillor Beaven
Councillor Farbahi	Councillor Bishop
Councillor Mrs Floyd	Councillor Bowrah
Councillor Gaines	Councillor Cavill

Councillor Mrs Hill	Councillor Denington
Councillor Horsley	Councillor D Durdan
Councillor Miss James	Councillor Miss Durdan
Councillor R Lees	Councillor Edwards
Councillor Mrs Lees	Councillor A Govier
Councillor Ms Lisgo	Councillor Hall
Councillor Mrs Messenger	Councillor Hayward
Councillor Morrell	Councillor Mrs Herbert
Councillor Mullins	Councillor C Hill
Councillor Prior-Sankey	Councillor Hunt
Councillor Gill Slattery	Councillor Meikle
Councillor T Slattery	Councillor Nottrodt
Councillor Mrs Smith	Councillor Ms Palmer
Councillor P Smith	Councillor Mrs Reed
Councillor Stone	Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams
Councillor Swaine	Councillor Mrs Warmington
Councillor Tooze	Councillor Watson
Councillor A Wedderkopp	Councillor Mrs Waymouth
Councillor D Wedderkopp	Councillor Williams
	Councillor Wren

6. **Motion – Economic Growth and Regeneration**

Moved by Councillor Horsley and seconded by Councillor Coles.

“The Council notes that the Local Government Association Peer Group Review urges Taunton Deane to put economic growth and regeneration as its top priority in formulating its Corporate Business Plan. It notes too that the Council should adopt a policy of acquiring assets which provide an “income stream” to meet the reduction in expenditure brought about by the recession and the cuts demanded by central Government.

The Council therefore deeply regrets that the opportunity to pursue a bid to acquire the Orchard Centre from JP Morgan was not followed through as it would have:-

- (a) Secured the future of the Taunton Town Centre;
- (b) Given the Council the chance to redevelop the retail offer here;
- (c) Resisted applications for retail development out of town; and
- (d) Provided the Council with an income stream of some 6% per annum to assist in reducing the budget deficits identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Council recognises that these circumstances have shown it to be ill equipped to meet the commercial realities of our time and demands that the ruling group sets its sights higher.”

The motion was put and was carried.

7. Changes to the Standards Committee and appointment of the Independent Co-optees

At the meeting of Full Council in July 2012, Members agreed a series of recommendations relating to the introduction of a new Standards Regime for Taunton Deane in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

One of those recommendations was to create a Standards Committee and decide its composition. Full Council agreed that there should be a Committee of nine made up of five elected Members, politically balanced, two parish representatives and two co-opted members.

Three of the ex-independent members of the Standards Committee had recently been interviewed by a Panel of Councillors for the independent co-optee positions on the new Standards Committee.

The Panel had found it extremely difficult to choose two out of the three members as all were extremely knowledgeable and would bring a great deal of experience to the Committee. The Monitoring Officer had confirmed that subject to Full Council agreement the number of independent co-optees on the Committee could be extended.

Resolved that:-

- (1) the number of Independent co-optees able to sit on the Standards Committee be increased to three; and
- (2) Anne Elder, Terry Bowditch and Adrian Cox be appointed to those roles.

7. Recommendations to Council from the Executive

(a) Review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012-2042

The first review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2012-2042 had recently been undertaken.

In the first few months of the financial year it had become apparent that there were a number of issues – set out below – that required amendment or inclusion in the Business Plan, as the context in which Housing Services operated continued to change rapidly.

Uplift of Disabled Facilities Grant and Aids and Adaptations Budget

The HRA had budgeted £500,000 capital per year to provide disabled aids and adaptations for tenants in our stock. This work was undertaken by the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP).

In view of the fact that need is likely to increase in future years as the

population aged, SWPSHP had been commissioned to undertake a needs analysis. For business planning purposes it was thought prudent to increase this provision by 5% per year for the next 10 years and then for it to remain fixed for the remainder of the plan period.

Stock Investment Figures and Data Cleanse

Work had been undertaken to cleanse the stock data of certain inaccuracies and carry out stock condition surveys. The impact of this work had been a slight reduction in the Future Major Works requirement for our stock over 30 years of approximately £4,000,000.

However, there remained a significant backlog of work created in part by tenant refusals for improvement works previously and other works not completed as part of the Decent Homes programme. As a consequence, the overall capital expenditure over the 30 year period had risen to £191,000,000.

Extension of Properties

The review had identified the need for a budget to provide Housing Services with an additional means of helping to alleviate the housing need of those who were living in overcrowded conditions. It was proposed to create a new improvements budget of £160,000 per year to fund approximately 4 two storey extensions per year.

Related Assets

In the original Business Plan an additional budget allocation of £3,600,000 over 30 years and £600,000 in Years 1-5, for related assets had been made. This was in respect of a programme of repairs for non dwelling assets such as garages and sewage treatment works.

Environmental Improvements

£150,000 per annum had been allocated for environmental improvements on estates such as additional car parking, waste storage facilities, mobility scooter stores and fencing.

Sustainable Energy Fund

A Sustainable Energy Fund of £6,600,000 over 30 years had been established to provide affordable warmth and improve the energy efficiency of homes. In order to utilise this fund, a project was emerging which had two key elements - 'Retrofit works to properties' and 'Tenant Lifestyle Awareness'.

Full project planning, commissioning and evaluation would be required and it was felt that recruitment of a Project Manager to undertake the next level of detailed planning would be required.

Social Housing Development Fund (SHDF)

Following the establishment of this fund (£2,300,000 in the first four years) in the new Business Plan work had progressed to identify sites that may be suitable for development.

Reported that approximately 26 new units were feasible, at an approximate cost of £3,430,000. If the Phase 1 sites were to be delivered, an additional

£1,130,000 would need to be added to the Capital Programme.

Alongside these early wins in terms of site development, Taunton Deane also needed to create a development policy to frame the way in which this fund would be used and to identify some of the relevant variables concerning house building. An Interim Development Policy had been drafted which was included in the report to the Executive. .

Exceptional Extensive

Funding amounting to £18,300,000 over 30 years for works such as asbestos removal, subsidence and works to our non traditional properties had been allocated in the Business Plan. Survey work was due to take place shortly to assist in planning for the future of non traditional stock in the years to come.

Planned Maintenance

One of the changes that was made following the “No” vote to stock transfer in 2006, was to reduce the frequency of planned maintenance from a cycle of five years to eight years. It was now potentially possible to reverse this position and re-establish a five-yearly programme.

Welfare Reform

An emerging Housing Services Welfare Reform Strategy had set out actions over the next 12 to 24 months for effectively managing the changes contained in the Government’s Welfare Reform Programme.

However a potential impact was that the level of financial hardship was likely to increase in the community with greater challenges in collecting rent being experienced and debt levels likely to increase.

The amount of irrecoverable debt could also increase leading to a higher level of write offs. Consequently, it was proposed to increase the bad debt allowance in the HRA Business Plan from 0.5% to 2% for a period of three years.

Right to Buy review and policy on use of additional receipts

The Council had signed an agreement with the Government under which the Council would continue to receive the income it was expecting from Right to Buy (RtB) receipts and this income would continue to support the Council’s General Fund Capital Programme.

The additional receipts produced from the completion of a total of 18 properties in the current year showed potential additional receipts in Year 1 of approximately £600,000.

To meet the conditions of the agreement and keep the additional income, the £600,000 would need to be matched with £1,400,000 of other resources such that total expenditure on affordable housing would reach £2,000,000 between April 2012 and March 2015.

Staffing

Development Team staffing

In order to deliver the projects identified above, additional resources would be required to lead on the HRA's development activities.

1. Housing Enabling - The current part time post holder would increase hours from three days a week to four on a temporary basis. The HRA would pay for two days of this officer's time to work on site development. The remaining two days would be committed to continuing regeneration projects funded from the SHDF.

2. Housing Development Projects Lead (Sustainable Energy) - A temporary post (18 months) would be recruited to lead on the Sustainable Energy project and other related projects in the HRA. This post would be funded from the Sustainable Energy Fund.

3. Housing Development Projects Lead - An additional post would be recruited to bring forward some of the capital projects with new allocated resources. This post would be funded by the Exceptional Extensive and Environmental Improvements budgets.

4. Development Manager - It was proposed to create a senior manager position to oversee all development activity, and potentially draw together the above posts to create a small Development Team. It was proposed that an additional salaries allocation of £70,000 should be made for this post and administrative support.

Repairs Line

The Repairs Line service was open to Housing tenants to report repairs required Monday to Friday. It was proposed to restore staffing levels by the 26 hours lost over the past few years. The additional cost of this proposal was £15,000.

IT Improvement

Taunton Deane Housing currently used four business critical software applications. Deane DLO would be replacing its dated software system which would involve certain changes having to be made to the other three applications. These works would require around three years to complete at an approximate total one off cost of £500,000, with continuing costs of £33,000 per annum ongoing.

Other Financial Adjustments

Inflation Adjustment

Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation had been falling in recent months and had reduced substantially over the past 12 months. It would therefore be prudent to reduce the level of inflation included within the model from 3.5% to 2.5%.

Interest Rate Saving

Due to better interest rates than modelled at the point of the transaction there

were additional savings in the Business Plan of £936,000 in Year 1. It was considered inadvisable to use interest savings at this time to pay off any debt capital.

The difference in interest rate on the loans had also affected the forecasted investment income on the HRA reserve balance, and the overall net saving was now estimated to be £817,000.

The HRA was likely to generate significant cash surpluses over the long term. It was proposed to establish a principle that surplus resources should be added to the Social Housing Development Fund, where prudent, to support further affordable housing provision. This was seen as a more sensible alternative to building excessive balances in the HRA reserve.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Adkins, it was

Resolved that:-

- (1) The Disabled Facilities Grant and Aids and Adaptations budget be uplifted by 5% for the next ten years pending the outcome of the needs analysis;
- (2) A new improvements budget of £160,000 per year be created which would be used to fund approximately 4 two storey extensions per year;
- (3) Extending the reach of the current Social Housing Development Fund by utilising some of the borrowing headroom towards funding for housing development be explored;
- (4) The Interim Development Policy set out in the report to the Executive be approved;
- (5) Allowance for bad debt in the HRA be increased to 2% for a period of three years from 1 April 2013;
- (6) The additional Right to Buy receipts be ring-fenced and allocated to a separate budget code. Subsequently proposals would be brought to Members to make decisions as to how they were allocated - either to traditional housing enabling projects or to development within the Housing Revenue Account, on the basis of the continuing project need and spending the receipts within the restrictions of the agreement with the Government;
- (7) The outlined approach to additional staffing to support the Business Plan objectives and a consequent increase in revenue staffing costs of £55,000 be agreed;
- (8) It be agreed that any surplus Social Housing Development Fund budget remaining at the end of any financial year be allocated to a new Social Housing Development Fund earmarked Housing Revenue Account reserve; and

- (9) The principle be agreed that surplus cash resources within the Housing Revenue Account be allocated to the new Social Housing Development Fund Reserve at the end of each financial year, where prudent.

(b) Earmarked Reserves Review

A review had recently been undertaken of a number of earmarked reserves held by the Council to ensure that the level of each reserve was adequate and that the purpose for which the funds were set aside still applied.

The level of earmarked General Fund reserves as at 31 March 2012 was £7,072,000. This included money set aside for specific revenue purposes, but did not include the £3,336,000 in General Fund balances.

As a result of the review, there were various earmarked reserves, totalling £298,819.52, that were no longer required.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (i) £59,167.44 of surplus earmarked reserves be transferred to the General Fund Reserves in the current financial year; and
- (ii) £239,652.08 of surplus earmarked reserves be transferred to the Housing Revenue Account Reserve in the current financial year.

(c) Fees and Charges 2013/2014

Consideration had been given to the proposed fees and charges for 2013/2014 for the following services:-

- Cemeteries and Crematorium;
- Waste Services;
- Housing;
- Deane Helpline;
- Licensing;
- Planning;
- Environmental Health; and
- Charging for Housing Act (Improvement and Prohibition) Notices and Immigration Visits.

Details of the proposed increases were submitted. No increase was proposed to Land Charges fees or the fees for recovering Court Costs.

The results of previous public consultation events had clearly indicated that the public preferred to see increases in fees and charges, rather than in Council Tax, as a way for the Council to raise income.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that the fees and charges for 2013/2014 in respect of Cemeteries and Crematorium, Waste Services, Housing, Deane Helpline, Licensing, Planning and Environmental Health and Housing Act Notices/Immigration Visits be agreed.

(d) Proposed loan to Somerset County Cricket Club to enable development

The Executive had recently considered a request from the Somerset County Cricket Club (SCCC) for the Council to provide loan finance of £1,000,000 to enable the County Ground to become a venue which could stage one-day and twenty-twenty international cricket matches.

SCCC had made its request to the Council for the following reasons:-

- (1) The proposed terms of the loan would be much more attractive than could be achieved through bank funding;
- (2) The England and Wales Cricket Board had recently approved the move of the County Ground to international status, but this had to be achieved within a three year period or the approval would be withdrawn; and
- (3) The benefits of staging international cricket were considerable in contributing to the economic regeneration of Taunton and SCCC believed that Council loan support would enable the Club to stage international matches within a five year period.

It was within the power of the Council to offer the type of loan sought provided there was no cost to the local taxpayer. Making such a loan for capital purposes would be treated as capital expenditure and the repayment of the loan principal would be treated as capital receipts.

The type of loan recommended was the Equal Instalments of Principal (EIP) type where repayments would be the same amount of principal each year plus interest on a reducing balance.

The interest rate charged would be based on the PWLB (Public Works Loan Board) rate at which Taunton Deane could borrow, plus a 2% risk premium.

The capital expenditure incurred by the Council in making the loan would be funded by "internal" borrowing. Prudent provision would therefore need to be made to repay the borrowing under the Minimum Revenue Provision

regulations.

The loan would be secured by a legal charge over the property owned by the SCCC.

Moved by Councillor Horsley, seconded by Councillor Mrs Smith that:-

- (i) The risk premium be raised from 2% to 3%; and
- (ii) The recommendation be altered to include "(c) £10,000 of the interest paid per annum be allocated to the Youth Fund to be used to meet the cost of approved projects across the Taunton Deane area".

The amendment was put and was lost.

On the the motion of Councillor Cavill, it was

Resolved that the principle of a 15 year £1,000,000 loan to the Somerset County Cricket Club to enable further improvements towards the County Ground becoming a venue for international matches be approved, subject to:-

- (a) Final terms of the loan being approved on the lines detailed in the report and by the Section 151 Officer; and
- (b) Agreement from the Somerset County Cricket Club to enter into a legal agreement to be approved by the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer that safeguarded the Council's financial position.

(e) Taunton Deane Business Investment Fund

The Council had an ambitious strategy of growth for Taunton Deane. One important element of this strategy was that by 2027 the district would sustain an additional 11,900 jobs.

The environment to attract mobile investment was competitive, as most Councils carried out marketing activities, sometimes enhanced by specific inward investment incentives.

The Council already operated a Small Business Grant for start up businesses in Taunton Deane and also assisted rural Post Offices and retailers through financial support and assistance. The Council also funded loan finance to businesses through the Fredericks Foundation.

However, the Council had recently been approached by a business that was currently looking to invest in Wellington, which would result in the creation of around 200 jobs. It had asked the Council for a financial contribution towards its investment.

Furthermore, there were two existing businesses, also in Wellington, that urgently required new premises to enable them to expand and create jobs. Without financial assistance neither would be able to invest, and both might

leave Taunton Deane.

To enable such assistance to be provided, it was proposed to identify a fund to encourage and facilitate local job creation. The amount of that fund would be £300,000 and would support an Investment Grant scheme, payable to businesses.

The Investment Grant would be tied directly to job creation and would be offered at the level of £1,000 per FTE new job created, up to a ceiling of £100,000 for any one business. It was also proposed to put a minimum size on the application and to support a minimum of 10 jobs in any one submission.

The Investment Grant would be open to businesses in all sectors and throughout Taunton Deane and applicants would have to demonstrate that the following conditions had been met:-

- The Council's Grant was matched in at least equal part by the business's own financial contribution;
- The Council's grant was directly related to the creation of new jobs within the company. Those jobs had to be based in Taunton Deane and be offered on the basis that they were permanent positions. If jobs disappeared within a two year period the Council would retain the right to reclaim the money;
- The Council's financial contribution did not breach EU State Aid Rules; and
- Projects to be supported were ready to proceed within an agreed maximum period.

The Council's grant support would lead to the direct creation of a defined number of jobs, which could be valued based on the earnings of each job created. The average annual salary for a full time employee in Taunton Deane was £22,318. If the grant led to the creation of one job per £1,000 grant, the £300,000 fund would directly generate £6,695,400 of new earnings.

Currently insufficient financial incentives existed to support businesses to invest into or expand in Taunton Deane. An Investment Fund, with an Investment Grant, would significantly enhance the Council's offer, and would enable it to put real money into its stated growth strategy to attract new businesses and to support growth amongst local, existing businesses.

On the motion of Councillor Cavill, it was

Resolved that:-

- (1) The sum of £300,000 be allocated from within the existing 2012/2013 Budget to a Business Investment Fund, which would encourage investment in Taunton Deane and would directly lead to job creation in the district; and

- (2) Authority to approve individual grant applications be delegated to the Executive Portfolio holder for Economic Development and Regeneration in conjunction with the relevant Director and Section 151 Officer.

(f) Castle Green, Taunton Completion Works

The initial works at Castle Green, Taunton were now almost finished. Only the correction of a small number of agreed defects and the installation of a ramp to the grassed area remained to be completed.

The scheme agreed by Members and for which planning permission and Scheduled Ancient Monument consent had been obtained also included:-

- Closure of Castle Way to all vehicles;
- Resurfacing of Castle Way in the same materials as the rest of Castle Green;
- Relocation of the bus stops from Castle Way to Corporation Street;
- Installation of new planter beds on both sides of Castle Way;
- Installation of a turning head at the junction of Castle Green and Castle Way; and
- Reprioritisation and re-marking of the junction of Tower Street and Castle Street.

The cost of completing the agreed scheme was £340,000. This was £200,000 more than the remaining approved budget for the following reasons:-

- (i) £64,000 of additional costs relating to the initial works as a result of delays in laying the stone setts caused by extreme wet weather during late spring and early summer;
- (ii) £64,000 of additional costs relating to the initial works as a result of archaeological excavations, investigation and recording;
- (iii) £50,000 of additional costs relating to the completion works as a result of the delays in agreeing a satisfactory scheme to relocate the bus stops with the County Council; and
- (iv) £22,000 of additional costs for new bus shelters as the positioning of these was now expected to be adjacent to the Old Municipal Buildings listed building and therefore had to be in keeping.

£50,000 of savings had been identified which reduced the budgetary shortfall to £150,000 which could be funded from unallocated resources in the Growth Points capital reserve.

On the motion of Councillor Cavill, it was

Resolved that a further £150,000 of Growth Points capital funding be transferred to the Council's Capital Programme in respect of the completion

works for Castle Green, Taunton.

(g) Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Taunton Deane

The proposed introduction of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Taunton Deane to replace the current national Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme had recently been considered by the Executive.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provided for the abolition of Council Tax Benefit, to take effect from 1 April 2013 and each Council Tax Billing Authority had to have its own, locally set, Council Tax Support Scheme, effective from the same date.

Although the Council had discretion concerning the rules of the local scheme as far as they affected people of working age, the Government intended to prescribe rules which did not permit a reduction in expenditure for people of pensionable age.

In common with their Somerset Council counterparts, Taunton Deane proposed to base the local CT scheme in Year 1 for working age citizens on the broad principles of the present CTB scheme given that the existing benefit system had been developed to protect a number of disadvantaged groups and carried least risk in terms of software development.

A number of features of the current scheme had been assessed to see if the changes would deliver the reduction in expenditure necessary to match the likely grant from the Government. Certain common scenarios had also been considered collectively to see if they would potentially be suitable to all Somerset authorities.

From those discussions, the key changes which were proposed between Taunton Deane's local scheme for working age claimants and the current CTB scheme were:-

- Maximum support would be 75-80% of Council Tax – everyone of working age would have to pay something;
- Non-dependant deductions would be increased;
- Second adult rebate to cease;
- Child maintenance to be counted as income;
- Earned income disregards to rise; and
- A hardship fund to be established for short term help. (This would be a collection fund commitment rather than be fully funded by Taunton Deane).

The draft proposals for Taunton Deane's Local Council Tax Support Scheme

had been subject to an extensive public consultation exercise which ran over eight weeks, commencing 6 August until 5 October 2012.

A total of 113 responses to Taunton Deane's consultation were received. Across Somerset as a whole a total of 3,508 responses were made to the consultation of whom 59% were respondents in receipt of CTB.

There was nothing arising from the consultation response which demonstrated overwhelming opposition to any particular element of the proposed scheme or to the scheme itself although some respondents had highlighted that the proposals were likely to have an appreciable adverse impact on their particular household finances.

A copy of the full, proposed Council Tax Support Scheme together with a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment had been circulated to Members to ensure the issues connected with the scheme were fully understood prior to a decision being taken.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams, it was

Resolved that subject to the Government making the necessary regulations:-

- (a) The scheme for providing Council Tax support for working age households on low incomes from 1 April 2013, as set out in the report to the Executive, be adopted; and
- (b) The Discretionary Housing Payment and Council Tax Assistance Policy to enable additional short-term assistance to be given in respect of Council Tax for those in hardship from 1 April 2013 be also adopted.

(h) Council Tax Charges – Empty Properties and Second Homes

Consideration had been given to the Government's proposal to allow Council's to amend (within limits) the Council Tax charges which would apply from 1 April 2013 in respect of:-

- second homes;
- homes undergoing, or requiring, structural work;
- properties empty for six months or less; and
- properties that had been empty for more than two years.

Decreasing the reductions would increase the Tax collectable for both this Council and the precepting authorities and could act as a stimulus for bringing empty properties back into occupation.

Full details of the proposed changes to the Council's current level of charging had been circulated to Members.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams, it was

Resolved that subject to the Government making the necessary regulations, the following changes to Council Tax charges be introduced from 1 April 2013:-

- (i) To allow a discount of 100% for a maximum of 12 months, in respect of properties which would have qualified for a Class A exemption, had that exemption continued;
- (ii) To allow a 100% discount, but limited to a maximum period of three months, in respect of properties which would otherwise have qualified for a Class C exemption, had that exemption continued;
- (iii) To remove the 10% discount on second homes; and
- (iv) To impose a premium levy of an additional 50% of Council Tax due on properties that had been empty and unfurnished for more than two years.

(i) Revenues and Benefits Service Feasibility Service

The feasibility of bringing the Revenues and Benefits service back in-house in response to the forthcoming changes which were likely through the Government's proposals for Welfare Reform and the localisation of Business Rates had recently been discussed.

The Government's proposals were likely to result in significant changes in workload for the Revenues and Benefits service coupled with an overall cut in the Government grant that was received to administer benefits.

Three key objectives for the Council as to how the legislative changes in the Revenues and Benefits service should be carried out had been identified as follows:-

- i) To minimise the cost to the Authority and the impact on customers of implementing the changes to the Benefits and Local Taxation Regulations;
- ii) To maximise the Council's flexibility to manage the Revenues and Benefits service resources through the period of significant change; and
- iii) Look to reduce the costs to the Council of delivering the Revenues and Benefits service.

Two broad options for accommodating these changes within the contract with Southwest One had been tested against these objectives. These were:-

Option 1 - Changing the pricing model within the contract to provide a pricing structure that could keep pace with a rapidly changing environment and varying workloads, whilst ensuring the Council maintained service delivery; or

Option 2 - Return the Revenues and Benefits service to in-house service provision through the service termination provisions built into the contract.

Both options had been discussed with Southwest One and it has been agreed that Option 2 would be the most effective solution to allow Taunton Deane to meet the objectives outlined above.

As a result, a detailed study into the feasibility of bringing the service back in-house has been undertaken which had concluded that it would be feasible to:-

- make this change from a financial perspective and to do so would not be prejudicial to the Council's overall budget position; and
- terminate the Revenues and Benefits service within the terms of the contract and to amend the contract to reflect this change.

Negotiations with Southwest One had been completed on the key elements of a termination agreement. Consequently the Council was now in a position to make a decision to terminate.

An 'in principle' agreement with Southwest One had been reached for the service to be returned on 1 April 2013 and for the termination costs to be limited to the fixed amount only.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- i) The Revenues and Benefits service element of the Southwest One contract be terminated and the Corporate and Client Services Manager be authorised to issue the required termination notice with immediate effect;
- ii) The Corporate and Client Services Manager be authorised to complete the necessary changes to the contract to implement the termination of the Revenues and Benefits service in line with the 'in principle' termination agreement;
- iii) Decision making authority be delegated to the Group Leaders, if required, to decide upon any key changes to the agreement (It was not anticipated that this would be required, but this delegation was recommended to facilitate quick decision making should any key changes be required between now and completing the detailed contract changes at the end of January 2013); and
- iv) Up to £20,000 be allocated to cover the cost of additional resource required to support the service transfer and staff transition (This would be funded from the initial savings set out in the report to the Executive).

Resolved that Standing Order 28, Time limits for all meetings, be suspended to enable the meeting to continue for a further half an hour.

(j) Refurbishment of Station Road Pool and Sport England Bid

The proposal for the refurbishment of the Station Road Pool in Taunton had previously been presented to Members as part of the overall Pools Provision Project.

The findings of the Swimming Task and Finish Review along with the further feasibility work of the Pools Provision Project had identified that the required Capital investment needed to ensure that Station Road Pool continued to remain attractive to users was in the order of £1,200,000

It had also been identified that to ensure the delivery of sufficient swimming provision and preserve the existing water space already available would require the combination of the delivery of a new pool and the refurbishment of Station Road Pool.

An opportunity for the Council to apply to the Sport England Improvement Fund for funding of up to £500,000 specifically for improvements to swimming pool changing rooms, had become available earlier in the year.

A two stage application had been made to Sport England and at the end of October 2012 the Council was informed that it had been selected for the final application stage.

The final stage bid was driven by a short timescale set by Sport England where the final and third stage application had to be submitted by 18 January 2013.

One of the key criteria to satisfy eligibility to receive the funding was a confirmed commitment from the Council to provide funding to meet the remainder of the overall £1,200,000 refurbishment project.

If successful, the Sport England Funding would be dedicated to improving the changing rooms, changing room plant and the reception area.

The £770,000 to be provided by the Council would fund the upgrade of pool plant equipment, refurbishment of the pool hall and pool disinfectant system.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Herbert, it was

Resolved that:-

- (1) The Council's bid for Sport England Improvement funding of up to £500,000 towards the Station Road Swimming Pool Refurbishment Project be supported; and
- (2) The proposed contribution of £770,000 from Taunton Deane's unallocated capital receipts be approved.

(k) Orchard Multi-Storey Car Park, Taunton – Structural Survey and Lifts

The Executive had recently considered the findings and recommendations of specialist investigations into the condition of the Orchard Multi-Storey Car Park structure and its integral lifts.

Although the structure had performed well over the past 40 years and was not in danger of failing, there were repairs and protective measures which needed to be carried out to prevent further deterioration and to provide a parking environment that was both safe and attractive to motorists. The works fell into three categories:-

Capital	
Structural repair work required within 12 months	£27,500
Preventative maintenance work required within five years (to give a life beyond 10 years)	£705,000
Revenue	
Minor repairs and redecorations	£25,000

The three passenger lifts within the car park were of a similar age and breakdowns were not an irregular occurrence, leading to public frustration and complaint. The lift maintenance contractor had estimated that it was likely to cost an additional £180,000 to fully refurbish them.

The Capital Estimate provision for works to the Orchard Multi-Storey Car Park was currently £245,000 and following detailed discussion, the Executive had agreed that this finance should be used on replacing all three lifts as a matter of priority.

The Executive had also considered that the Capital resources amounting to £164,000 which remained unallocated should be allocated towards the other works needed at the car park and that the shortfall of funding required to complete all the works to the car park should be accumulated from Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay over the next four years.

On the motion of Councillor Edwards, it was

Resolved that the identified structural and preventative maintenance works to the Orchard Multi-Storey Car Park be included in the future Capital Programme – funded by the £164,000 of unallocated Capital resources and a four years Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) of £125,750 (to be agreed as part of the Budget Setting for the 2013/2014 Financial Year).

8. Reports of the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillors

Due to Standing Order 28, Time limits for all meetings, insufficient time was available to enable the following Executive Councillor reports to be formally presented to Members. These reports were submitted for information only.

(i) Leader of the Council (Councillor Williams)

Councillor Williams's report covered the following topics:-

- Flooding;
- Budget Setting;

- Project Taunton;
- A303/A30/A358 Somerset County Council Initiative;
- Infrastructure Costs and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); and
- Local Enterprise Partnership.

(ii) **Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts and Tourism (Councillor Cavill)**

The report from Councillor Cavill covered:-

- Launch of Taunton Means Business;
- Launch of Taunton Events website;
- Taunton Local Enterprise and Innovation Area;
- Business Start up Grants and Rural Retailer Grants;
- Jobs Clubs;
- Taunton Youth and Community Centre;
- Recent Events; and
- Taunton Tourist Information, Ticket and Travel Centre update.

(iii) **Environmental Services and Climate Change (Councillor Hayward)**

The report from Councillor Hayward drew attention to developments in the following areas:-

- Environmental Health;
- Climate Change / Carbon Management;
- Waste Management; and
- Deane DLO.

(iv) **Sport, Parks and Leisure (Councillor Mrs Herbert)**

The report from Councillor Mrs Herbert dealt with activities taking place in the following areas:-

- Parks;
- Community Leisure and Play; and
- Tone Leisure (Taunton Deane) Limited Activities.

(v) **Housing Services (Councillor Mrs Adkins)**

Councillor Mrs Adkins submitted her report which drew attention to the following:-

- Affordable Housing Target;
- Right to Buy Sales; Housing Enabling - Regeneration;
- Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership;
- Estates Management – Anti-social Behaviour;

- Self-Financing and HRA Business Plan; and
- Shelter.

(vi) **Corporate Resources (Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams)**

The report from Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams provided information on the following areas within her portfolio:-

- Customer Contact Centre;
- Corporate and Client Services;
- Corporate Performance;
- Legal and Democratic Services; and
- Revenues and Benefits.

(vii) **Planning, Transportation and Communications (Councillor Edwards)**

The report from Councillor Edwards provided information on the following areas within his portfolio:-

- Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan;
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA);
- Authorities Monitoring Report;
- Technical Policy Reports;
- Neighbourhood Planning;
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- Positive Planning Protocol;
- Heritage – Sandhill Park, Tonedale and Tone Works; and
- Communications.

(viii) **Community Leadership (Councillor Mrs Jane Warmington)**

Councillor Mrs Warmington presented the Community Leadership report which focused on the following areas within that portfolio:-

- Police and Crime Commissioner;
- Safer Somerset Partnership
- Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Panel;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Priority Areas Strategy; and
- Family Futures (Troubled Families).

(Councillors Brooks, Mrs Lees, Prior-Sankey, Mrs Warmington and D Wedderkopp all left the meeting at 9.08 pm. Councillor Tooze left the meeting at 9.17 pm. Councillors Mrs Baker and Mrs Floyd left the meeting at 9.43 pm and Councillors Mrs Messenger and Swaine at 9.45 pm.)

(The meeting ended at 9.48 pm.)

Usual Declarations of Interest by Councillors

Full Council

- **Members of Somerset County Council – Councillors Brooks, A Govier, Henley, Prior-Sankey, Mrs Waymouth, D Wedderkopp**
- **Employees of Somerset County Council – Councillors Mrs Hill, Mrs Smith and Stone**
- **Employee of Sedgemoor District Council – Councillor Slattery**
- **Employee of Job Centre Plus – Councillor Henley**
- **Employee of UK Hydrographic Office – Councillor Tooze**
- **Employee of Natural England – Councillor Wren**
- **Somerset Waste Board representatives – Councillor Hayward and Councillor Ross**
- **Director of Southwest One – Councillor Nottrodt**
- **Alternate Director of Southwest One – Councillor Ross**
- **Tone Leisure Board representatives – Councillors D Durdan and Stone**
- **Part-time Swimming Instructor – Councillor Swaine**
- **Employee of EDF Energy – Councillor Mullins**
- **Member of the Board of Governors at Somerset College – Councillor Gill Slattery**
- **Patron of Supporters, Taunton Women’s Aid – Councillor Gill Slattery**
- **Owner of land in Taunton Deane – Councillor Farbahi**

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Full Council – 22 January 2013

Update of Contract Procedure Rules

Report of the Monitoring Officer

(This is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee)

1. The Contract Standing Orders have not been updated since 2006 and therefore do not reflect the partnership with Southwest One.
2. An audit carried out by the South West Audit Partnership recommended changes to the standing orders to reflect these changes and to ensure that they were up to date.
3. The Monitoring Officer, together with other officers, has therefore reviewed the procedure rules and has made some changes. Those changes are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
4. The changes to the procedure rules have also been approved by the Constitutional Sub-Committee and the Corporate Governance Committee who have recommended them for approval by Full Council.

It is therefore **recommended** that the Contract Procedure Rules set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

Contact Officer : Tonya Meers 01823 356391 or
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Appendix 1

Contract Procedure Rules

Contract Procedure Rules

Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules

1. Every Contract made by the Authority or officer acting on its behalf shall comply with these Contract Procedure Rules, all relevant Statutory Provisions, with any relevant EU Directives currently in force in the United Kingdom, the Councils Financial Regulations and the Strategic Objectives of the Authority.
2. Where a corporate contract, negotiated by Southwest One Strategic Procurement Service, exists for the supply of specific goods or services (such as for rail tickets, temporary staffing, stationery etc) the corporate supplier must be used, unless that supplier confirms they are unable to fulfil the particular order in question.
3. A Contract is an agreement between the Council and an individual or organisation for the individual or organisation to provide works, goods or services (including the engagement of consultants) for which the Council will provide consideration. Contracts relating solely to disposal or acquisition of land are exempt from these rules.
4. Officers involved in the awarding of a Contract must ensure that the best value for money is obtained. Before commencing procurement, it is essential that the authorised officer leading the procurement has identified the need and fully assessed the options for meeting those needs. The best use of purchasing power shall be sought by aggregating purchases wherever possible.
5. Exceptions from any of the following provisions of these Contract Procedure Rules may be made under the provisions of Contract Procedure Rule 13 or otherwise by direction of the Council, the Executive or the Executive Member where they are satisfied that the exception is justified in special circumstances. No exception shall apply to Contract Procedure Rule 19. Every exception and the reason therefore shall be recorded in the Tenders Register held by the Corporate Support Unit.

Southwest One

6. The Council has entered into a strategic partnering arrangement under which Southwest One (SW1) has contracted to provide a broad range of goods and services, including a number of procurement services. This includes the transformation of the procurement service to embed strategic Category Management as a methodology across the Council's external spend areas and procurement and management of corporate contracts for generic goods and services.

The Theme Manager, or the authorised officer leading the procurement, should always consult with the Chief Procurement Officer (SW1) to ascertain whether any particular services or goods fall within the description of services or goods to be provided by Southwest One and, if that be the case, the procurement of the said services or goods should normally be dealt with under the contractual arrangements with Southwest One.

In some instances, where Southwest One has already undertaken a procurement process in respect of services or goods of the type required, there may be no need for a further formal procurement process to be carried out. However, if that is not the case, the Theme Manager, or his authorised officer, in collaboration with Southwest One, must ensure that the procurement is carried out in accordance with these Contract Procedure Rules and, where the EU procedure applies, with the Regulations.

Notwithstanding the fact that a procurement may fall to be dealt with under this Contract Procedure Rule and subject to any provision in the Council's contractual arrangements with Southwest One having contrary effect, the Theme Manager, or the authorised officer leading the procurement, must still comply with his obligations to confirm that he/she has the appropriate power, authority and finance for the procurement to proceed.

Risk and Project Management

- 7 For procurement where the estimated spend is greater than Threshold 3 the Procurement Risk Management policy must be applied and decisions recorded. Any high risks that exceed the accepted threshold must be reported to Corporate Management Team (CMT). The Corporate Project Management process must be applied.
8. For procurement where the estimated spend is less than Threshold 3 the Service Manager must ensure that all risks are considered and managed, reporting to CMT any consequential risks that may seriously jeopardise the Council.
9. For procurement where the estimated spend is less than Threshold 3 the Corporate Project Management process should be used at the discretion of the Service Unit Manager particularly where the risk of failure would impact on the ability to deliver a service or create a significant consequential risk.

Specifications

10. Enquiries and Invitations to Tender shall be based on a written specification. The specification shall adequately describe the required procurement in sufficient detail to enable effective procurement in accordance with these rules.

Supplier Pre-Qualification

- 11 The Council shall only enter into a contract with a supplier if it is satisfied as to the supplier's eligibility, financial standing and technical capacity to undertake the contract. For contracts over Threshold 3 the Section 151 Officer will

formally vet those companies that have been selected to receive an invitation to tender.

Requirement for Quotation/Tender and Public Advertisement

12. Before entering into a Contract a written quotation/tender for the contract price must be secured. Consideration shall be given to other costs associated with the procurement (Lifetime costings including for example maintenance costs and power consumption). Where these could be significant such as in the final disposal of a product appropriate arrangements shall be put into place to consider these costs against alternative options.
 - a) **Contracts below Threshold 1**
At least one written quotation must be obtained, preferably more where there are opportunities for competitive savings.
 - b) **Contracts between Threshold 1 and Threshold 2**
Written quotations must be sought from not less than three individuals or organisations that could undertake the contract.
 - c) **Contracts between Threshold 2 and Threshold 3**
 - (i) A Public Notice must be made in the relevant section of the Council's website, setting out particulars of the contract and inviting persons interested to apply, within a period not less than 10 days, for permission to tender.
 - (ii) After the expiration of the period specified in the Public Notice invitations to tender shall be sent to not less than four individuals or organisations that could undertake the contract (or, if fewer than four apply, to those that are suitable). If less than four invitations to tender are sent then the reasons need to be noted in the tender register.
 - (iii) Tenders are to be submitted and opened in accordance with Contract Procedure Rule 18.
 - d) **Contracts above Threshold 3**
 - (i) The procurement shall comply with the requirements of the EU Procurement Directives.
 - (ii) A Public Notice must be made in the relevant section of the Council's website.

- (iii) After the expiration of the period specified in the Public Notice invitations to tender shall be sent to not less than four individuals or organisations selected in accordance with the applicable EU Procurement Directives (or, if fewer than four apply, to those that are suitable and the reasons noted in the register as set out in cii above.
 - (iv) Tenders are to be submitted and opened in accordance with Contract Procedure Rule 19.
- 13 Contract Procedure Rules 12a, 12b and 12c shall not apply to the following but, wherever possible, alternative quotations shall be obtained:
 - a) Purchases by auction or at public fairs or markets
 - b) Contracts involving special technical, scientific or artistic knowledge
 - c) Contracts in respect of which there would be no genuine competition (following consultation with the Theme Manager)
 - d) Contracts comprising spare or replacement parts of existing machinery or plant or repairs to such machinery or plant
 - e) The Contract to be entered into is to be dealt with in a prescribed manner under agency arrangements entered into by the Council with another authority
 - f) Urgent situations as agreed with the client Director and Executive Councillor where the authority is put at significant risk or significant costs could be incurred by not taking urgent remedial action.
 - g) Emergency situations (as defined in the Council's Business Continuity Strategy or Emergency Planning procedures)
- 14. Paragraphs 12a, 12b and 12c (up to Threshold 3) of these Contract Procedure Rules shall not apply to the entering into of contracts by the Deane DLO for the supply of goods or the engagement of sub-contractors where such transactions are necessary to enable the carrying out of contracts obtained by the Deane DLO after competitive tendering, provided that full details of all orders and contracts are maintained in such manner as required from time to time by the Section 151 Officer

15. Framework Agreements

A Framework Agreement is an agreement or other arrangement made with one or more suppliers for the provision of goods or materials, services or works under agreed terms and conditions during a specified period under which the Council may enter into specific contracts known as “call-offs”.

The term Framework Agreement must not exceed four years and, while an agreement may be entered into with one provider, where an agreement is concluded with several organisations, there must be at least three in number.

The Theme Manager must consult with the Chief Procurement Officer to ascertain what Framework Agreements are in place from time to time. Where such an Agreement which deals with the subject matter of the proposed contract is in existence, subject to the need to ensure value for money and to comply with EU Treaty principles and to obtaining the advice of the Chief Procurement Officer and, if necessary, the Monitoring Officer, the procurement will be dealt with under the Framework Agreement.

16. Every written contract shall specify
 - a) the work, materials, matters or things to be furnished, had or done;
 - b) the price to be paid, with a statement of discounts or other deductions (if any); and
 - c) the time or times within which the contract is to be performed.
17. Every contract which exceeds Threshold 3 and is either for the execution of work or the supply of goods or materials shall provide for payment of liquidated damages by the contractor in case the terms of the contract are not performed.

Submission of Tenders

18. Submission Procedures for contracts between Threshold 2 and Threshold 3
 - a) Where an invitation to tender is made, each invitation shall state that no tender will be considered unless it is enclosed in a plain sealed envelope. The envelope shall bear the word '**Tender**' - in large emboldened lettering followed by the subject to which it relates and the Tender reference number (if applicable) but no other name or mark indicating the identity of the sender.
 - b) The tenders shall be kept in the custody of the appropriate Director's nominated officer until the time and date specified for their opening.
 - c) Tenders shall be opened in the presence of (at least) two Council Officers. Tenders shall be date-stamped and signed on all pages containing price information.
19. Submission Procedures for contracts above Threshold 3

- a) Where an invitation to tender is made, each invitation shall state that no tender will be considered unless it is enclosed in a plain sealed envelope clearly addressed to the Legal and Democratic Services Manager. The envelope shall bear the word '**Tender**' - in large emboldened lettering followed by the subject to which it relates and the Tender reference number (if applicable) but no other name or mark indicating the identity of the sender.
 - b) The tenders shall be kept in the custody of Democratic Services Manager until the time and date specified for their opening.
 - c) Tenders shall be opened in the presence of (at least) two Council Officers and a Councillor. Tenders shall be date-stamped and signed on all pages containing price information.
 - d) All tenders which were received by the time and date specified shall be recorded in the Tenders Register maintained by the Legal and Democratic Services Manager.
- 20 Tenders received after the time and date specified in the invitation to tender shall be considered only in exceptional circumstances. A tender received late can only be considered with the approval of the Monitoring Officer or in her absence the Section 151 Officer.
- 21 Invitations to Tender may be issued by electronic means provided that evidence that the transmission was successfully completed is obtained and recorded.
- 22 Quotations and tenders may be submitted electronically provided that they are kept in a separate secure folder under the control of the authorised officer which is not opened until the deadline is passed for the receipt of tenders.

Acceptance of Quotations and Tenders

- 23 The tender that is most economically advantageous to the Council shall be accepted. Each tender shall be evaluated for price and quality to ascertain the most economically advantageous tender.
24. For procurements over Threshold 3 the questions and scoring system used to evaluate quality shall be written before tenders are received. The basis of this exercise shall be explained in any invitation to tender documentation
25. The Impact on Corporate Priorities will be considered in every procurement process and, where appropriate, incorporated into these Corporate Procedure Rules, any evaluation model used ultimately into the terms and conditions of contract.

26. Where the Officer considers it in the best interests of the Council he may negotiate with the tenderers whose tenders are being considered for acceptance. No negotiation on contracts whose value is in excess of Threshold 3 can take place without reference to the Theme Manager. Any negotiation which would distort competition is expressly forbidden. Details of the negotiations must be placed on the contract file.
27. Arithmetical errors found in the most economically advantageous tender when checking shall be dealt with as follows:
- a) Where the arithmetical error if corrected would inflate the cost of the contract to the Council the tenderer shall have the error pointed out to them and be offered the opportunity to stand by their tender or withdraw it
 - b) Where the arithmetical error if corrected would reduce the cost of the contract to the Council the tenderer shall have the error pointed out to them and corrected and be offered the opportunity to stand by their error or withdraw their tender.

Signing or Sealing of Contracts

28. Every successful quotation/tender shall be accepted in writing, provided that contracts which exceed Threshold 3 in value or amount and such other contracts as the Solicitor to the Council shall determine shall be set out in a formal contract document.

Authority to Commit the Council

29. Officers are authorised to commit the Council to expenditure on contracts as follows:
- | | | |
|----|------------------|--|
| a) | Chief Executive | £Unlimited |
| b) | Directors | Up to £1,000,000 |
| c) | Theme Manager | Up to £500,000 |
| d) | Service Managers | Up to Threshold 3 |
| e) | Other staff | As delegated by one of the above named officers low risk items, level not to exceed Threshold 3 and to be notified to Section 151 Officer. |

Nominated Sub-Contractors and Suppliers

- 30 Where a sub-contractor or supplier is to be nominated to a main contractor, the procurement of the services of the sub-contractor or supplier shall be subject to these Contract Procedure Rules.

Bribery

31. In every contract a clause shall be inserted to secure that the Council shall be entitled to cancel the contract and to recover from the contractor the amount of any loss resulting from such cancellation if the contractor shall have offered or given or agreed to give to any person any gift or consideration of any kind as an inducement or reward for doing or forbearing to do or for having done or forborne to do any action in relation to the obtaining or execution of the contract or any other contract with the Council, or for showing or forbearing to show favour or disfavour to any person in relation to the contract or any other contract with the Council, or if the like acts shall have been done by any person employed by him or acting on his behalf (whether with or without the knowledge of the contractor), or if, in relation to any contract with the Council, the contractor or any person employed by him or acting on his behalf shall have committed any offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts, 1889 to 1916, or shall have given any fee or reward the receipt of which is an offence under sub-section (2) of Section 117 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

Contracts Record

32. A record of all contracts in excess of Threshold 2 in value placed by the Council shall be kept on the Council's Intranet site. This register shall specify for each contract the name of the contractor, the works to be executed or the goods or services to be supplied, the contract value and the contract period. This is the responsibility of the officer authorising the contract to ensure that a timely entry is completed.

Contract Management

33. Project management shall be practiced at all times in undertaking procurement. All Threshold 2 and 3 contracts will be monitored on a quarterly basis by members of the Corporate Management Team or any such group set up by them for this purpose.
34. Any third party who is required to supervise a Contract on behalf of the Council shall comply with the requirements of these Contract Procedure Rules.

Contract Extensions of Time

- 35 In exceptional circumstances where it is in the interests of the Council and good value for money contracts may be extended in accordance with Financial Regulations.

36. For contracts where the value is over Threshold 3 or extension will take the contract value over Threshold 3 such an extension shall be with the prior agreement of the relevant Director and the Council's Section 151 Officer. A report on this decision shall be posted in the weekly bulletin. If the extension significantly alters the original contract value or purpose the extension can only be made with the additional agreement of the Executive portfolio councillor, who shall post their decision for possible call in accordingly.

Contract Variations to Scope

37. Any necessary instructions to vary a contract shall be made in writing by the Theme Manager or persons responsible for supervising the contract. Where a variation occurs during the currency of the contract that is material and cannot be met from within the original contract sum an immediate report shall be made to the Council's Section 151 Officer who shall decide what further action is necessary. Where a supplementary estimate is required this shall be made in accordance with the councils Financial Regulations.

Bonds, Guarantees and Insurances

38. For procurement projects where the spend is greater than Threshold 3 consideration must be given as part of the pre-qualification assessment and evaluation process as to whether a performance bond and/or parent company guarantee (if applicable) shall be required from the successful tenderer.
39. Consideration must be given as to the appropriate type (employee liability, public liability, professional indemnity, etc.) and level of insurance requirements for each contract.

Completion Statement

40. As soon as possible after completion of a Threshold 3 works contract the Theme Manager or person responsible for supervising the contract shall ensure the details are included in their service scorecard for future monitoring.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Confidentiality

41. There is a presumption that contractual information should be made available for disclosure if requested. However, officers should be aware of the potentially anti-competitive implications of disclosing detailed contractual information in the period around a procurement process taking place. Guidance and advice is available from the Council's Monitoring Officer.

During the period between the opening of proposals and/or tenders and the award of contract, all details of the proposals submitted must remain secret and be treated as confidential. It is the responsibility of those involved in the process to ensure complete confidentiality during this period.

Breaching of Contract Procedure Rules

- 42 Any non-compliance to or breach of these rules should be reported immediately to the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer. Failure to report any known non-compliance or breach may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee who failed to report the non-compliance or breach.

The Section 151 Officer will undertake an investigation where deemed necessary and they will refer the investigation findings to the Human Resources Manager in order that the appropriate disciplinary action can be taken where a serious or repeated breach of these rules is identified.

Retention of Records

- 43 On completion of the Tender process, all related documentation will be filed and retained for a period appropriate to the contract in the contract file. For further details of retention periods please see the Council's Document Retention Policy on the Intranet.

Review of Contract Procedure Rules

- 44 These rules will be reviewed and updated as required by changes to procurement legislation and regulation or to meet the operational requirements of the Council. The Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer will be responsible for undertaking the review and reporting to the Council for approval.

Appendix 1 – Thresholds

The thresholds below represent the total value of the contract, not just the annual value. For example, a 5 year supply contract with a value of £25,000 per year would have a value of £125,000 for the purposes of these rules.

	Works Contracts	Supplies & Services contracts
Threshold 1 -	£15,000	£ 5,000
Threshold 2 -	£50,000	£50,000
Threshold 3 -	The current EU procurement thresholds for 'Other public sector contracting authorities'	

For current EU thresholds visit <http://www.ojec.com/Thresholds.aspx>

Appendix 2 – Systems and Procedures

Order Controls

- 1.1 Ordering and requisitioning procedures shall conform to those instructions on the Council's procurement intranet page .
- 1.2 All works, goods and services, with the exception of rent, public utility supplies, small petty cash purchases and works and services covered by contract, shall be ordered on an official order through the Council's purchase order system in advance of the provision of those goods and services. An estimate of the cost, or where applicable, the quoted price shall be inserted, together with the relevant expenditure codes.
- 1.3 The Section 151 Officer shall approve officers authorised to place orders or make requisitions on behalf of the Council. This will be done through delegations and role allocations within the purchase order system.
- 1.4 Before authorising an order, the officer shall satisfy himself that the expenditure:
 - a) is covered in approved estimates;
 - b) is necessary providing Best Value; and
 - c) that Contract Procedure Rules in respect of contracts and tenders have been complied with.
- 1.5 The design, amendment, requisition, custody and issue of all forms are contained in the SAP system.
- 1.6 The Control of all orders/requisitions raised or otherwise held is the responsibility of each Manager. All order and requisition stationery shall be securely held by the responsible officer with copies and any cancelled forms accounted for.
- 1.7 Telephone orders are permitted, however they must be immediately followed up by an order marked "Confirmation".
- 1.8 Any orders requiring amendment should be cancelled and a revised order issued.

General Contract Controls

- 2.1 All contracts for the provision of services, the supply of goods and the execution of works, entered into on the Council's behalf shall be made in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 2.2 Officers and/or consultants shall where appropriate maintain adequate records to support all contract payments and valuations made, including all variations, omissions and additions to the contract sum.

- 2.3 Any contracts for works with a final value in excess of Threshold 2 (as defined in Contract Procedure Rules) together with supporting records, shall be subject to Audit and Review before any final payment is made.

Pre-Contract Controls

- 2.4 Each Theme Manager or officer leading the procurement shall prepare as appropriate a suitable project plan to financially control and monitor the subsequent performance of each contract.
- 2.5 Each Theme Manager, or officer leading the procurement, shall ensure that they have received the relevant financial references and these have been checked by Finance for contracts above threshold 3.
- 2.6 Letters of appointment shall specify the terms and conditions of consultants to the Council and the formula for paying fees. Their requirements to conform with the Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules shall be contained therein together with a right of Audit access to their records to validate payments and claims made on or behalf of the Council.

Current Contract Controls

- 2.7 Payments to contractors on account shall be made only on a certificate issued by the officer specified in the contract, or by his deputy or other such officer nominated by him in writing for the purpose.
- 2.8 Subject to the provisions of the contract in each case, every extra or variation shall, unless otherwise evidenced to his satisfaction, be authorised in writing by the officer specified in the contract, or by his deputy or other officer nominated by him in writing for the purpose.
- 2.9 Any such extra or variation, the estimated additional cost of which exceeds £5,000 shall be reported to the Director as soon as possible. The relevant approval for the financing solution should be considered at the same time.

Post Contract Controls

- 2.10 Wherever possible within the terms of the contract the final payment certificate on completion of any works contract shall not be issued until the appropriate officer has produced to Audit and Review, a detailed statement of account and all relevant documents if required.
- 2.11 The Internal Audit Service shall, to the extent that he considers necessary, examine final accounts and he shall be entitled to make such enquiries and receive information and explanations as he may require in order to satisfy themselves as to the accuracy of the accounts.

- 2.12 Claims from works contractors in respect of matters not clearly within the terms of a contract shall be dealt with by the responsible Service Unit Manager who shall consult as appropriate with the budget holding director and Audit and Review Manager before taking any action which might result in claims on the Council.
- 2.13 Where completion of a contract is delayed, it shall be the duty of the Service Unit Manager to inform Audit and Review and to take action in respect of any claim for liquidated damages in accordance with the contract.
- 2.14 In April of each year, the final cost of all projects completed in the preceding 12 months shall be reported to the Executive. Where the final cost of any individual project exceeds the estimated cost after tenders have been accepted by 2% or £25,000, whichever is the lesser, then a report will be presented to the Executive giving the reasons for the difference.
- 2.15 At the conclusion of a contract, an opportunity should be taken to evaluate the performance.

Council Meeting – 22 January 2013

Recommendations to Council from Tony Brown, Chairman, Independent Members' Allowances Panel

Members' Allowances

Recommendations from the Members' Allowances Panel

- 1.1 It has been a requirement of the Council's Constitution since 2001 for Members' Allowances to be independently reviewed on an annual basis.
- 1.2 The Members' Allowances Panel, currently comprises three independent members appointed following public advertisement.
- 1.3 The Panel has recently completed its annual review and now submits its report for consideration by Full Council.
- 1.4 From the research we have undertaken and from the information provided to us we feel we have a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the modern day Councillor.
- 1.5 The comparative data received this year has confirmed that many Councils in the South West, particularly those in Somerset have, like Taunton Deane, been reluctant to increase allowances due to the financial conditions that continue to exist on a national basis.
- 1.6 As well as the comparative information on the level of allowances paid, we also obtained information regarding payment of the Carer's Allowance, and levels of travel and subsistence allowances.
- 1.7 We reached the following conclusions:-

Carers Allowance

- 2.1 There is little evidence that this is an issue with many of the current Members of the Council. However, we are firmly of the view that every opportunity should be given to any individual who might want to stand as a candidate. We are therefore recommending that the Carer's Allowance continues to reflect the National Minimum Wage.
- 2.2 Last year Full Council decided to increase the hourly rate to £6.08 which was the national rate payable from October 2011.
- 2.3 The rate has been increased again before Christmas to the sum of £6.19 per hour. The Panel is therefore of the view that any claims made by Councillors for this allowance ought to again be paid at the current national rate.

Affordability

3.1 We did not see it as part of our remit to consider the affordability of our recommendations. We have deliberately not received any advice on the financial implications of our recommendations, as it was felt that this was a consideration to be made solely by the Council itself.

Basic Allowances

4.1 We would like to emphasise that in our opinion the Basic Allowance is not a full and proper recompense for the duties performed by a Councillor. It does not reflect a similar level of responsibility in the private sector. The recommendations reflect the fact that a proportion of any Councillor's work continues to be voluntary.

4.2 We believe that the Basic Allowance should continue to reflect the commitment in time necessary to be an effective local Councillor. We feel that the level of increase made four years ago resulted in a Basic Allowance that continues to match that paid by other, similar sized Local Authorities. The average level of Basic Allowance paid to a Councillor in a local authority banded as a "District Council with Executive" is £4,458 compared to the £4,301 paid to the Taunton Deane Members.

4.3 We are very mindful of the requirement for Councillors to work in their communities and spend less time in formal meeting situations. However, as in previous years, we are also mindful of the economic conditions that continue to exist within the country and how a recommended increase might be viewed by the public.

4.4 In previous years the increase recommended by the Panel has taken into account the current Retail Price Index (RPI) rate of inflation towards deciding the level of the Basic Allowance. In November, the RPI stood at 3%.

4.5 However, given the fact that a freeze on public sector pay is still in place and that, overall, the public finances are still in 'recovery' phase, the Panel is of the view that any increase to the Basic Allowance for Councillors simply cannot be justified, even when the RPI is taken into consideration. The Panel has therefore decided not to recommend any increase for the forthcoming year.

Special Responsibility Allowances

5.1 The Corporate Scrutiny and Community Scrutiny Committees have an equal standing. The Chairman of each Committee has the same level of responsibility and therefore receives an equal Responsibility Allowance.

5.2 Four years ago the Panel set a level of allowance to recognise this level of responsibility. However, from the comparative data available to the Panel it is apparent (as it was in previous years) that the allowance paid has been set at too low a level. The average paid to Scrutiny Chairmen at similar types of local authorities in the South West is in the region of £4,000. The Panel therefore

repeats its previous view that the Responsibility Allowance paid to the Scrutiny Chairmen should be increased.

5.3 We have a good understanding of the responsibilities of those offices that attract Special Responsibility Allowances. The “Cabinet” system has meant greater responsibility and time commitment for those given Executive roles. It is also evident from the figures of the other authorities that there is now a general recognition of the extra responsibilities that such Councillors have. However, for the same reasons outlined in the previous section of the report concerning Basic Allowances, we feel that the level of Special Responsibility Allowances, other than the Scrutiny Chairmen, should not be increased.

5.4 We also looked again at the level of allowance for the Chairmen of the Regulatory Committees and feel these too should remain the same.

Mayor and Deputy Mayor Allowance

6.1 Although it does not form part of the Members’ Allowances Scheme, the Council is entitled by virtue of Sections 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act 1972 to pay an allowance which enables the Mayor to meet the expenses of his/her office.

6.2 The Panel noted the very busy nature of the role of Mayor. With more than two hundred engagements each year, the value of the Mayor representing the ‘public face’ of the Council should not be under-estimated.

6.3 We are satisfied that the overall level of allowance currently paid to the Borough’s First Citizen and the deputy accurately reflects the duties of those roles. No increase is therefore recommended.

Approved Duties

7.1 We have taken a detailed look at the current list of Approved Duties. We are content that this list which is set out in Appendix A is satisfactory.

Parish Council Allowances

8.1 Existing powers to pay Parish Councillors allowances were repealed at the end of 2003 and replaced with a new system which involves this Panel.

8.2 Under this system, although a Parish Council would determine the level of allowances payable itself, it has to have regard to the advice received from the Panel.

8.3 Allowances payable include a basic ‘participation allowance’ which could be paid to the Chairman only or to all Members and ‘travelling and subsistence allowance’ which can be claimed for duties within the parish as well as those outside.

8.4 As far as the participation allowance was concerned, the general view from

Parish Councils nationally was that they wished to retain the existing practice whereby Parish Councillors were 'unpaid'. The advice we have received from the Parish Liaison Officer is that Parish Councils within Taunton Deane are currently not seeking any kind of allowance. We feel therefore, that there is no need to consider the matter until a formal request for advice as to the level of allowance that should be paid is received.

8.5 As well as seeking the Panel's views on the level of travelling and subsistence that should be payable to Parish Councillors, we were also previously asked to comment in relation to proposals for Parish Councils to meet the cost of minor expenses incurred by its members, such as the replacement of computer consumables used in respect of parish business

8.6 We agreed with the deliberations of the Panel in previous years and have come to the conclusion that:-

- (a) no advice on a level of Participation Allowance for Parish Councils be offered by the Panel until a formal request is received from a Parish Council;
- (b) allowances for travelling and subsistence should be identical to those payable to Borough Councillors and that the same level of such allowances should apply for all Parishes throughout Taunton Deane; and
- (c) it would be in order for Parish Councillors to seek the reimbursement of the actual cost of items used for Parish Council business, such as computer consumables, or a nominal sum, provided such payments were approved by the Parish Council.

Travel and Subsistence Allowances

9.1 The Regulations allow Local Authorities to determine their own travel and subsistence allowances after having regard to the recommendation of their independent Members' Allowances Panels.

9.2 As far as mileage rates are concerned, the Panel considers that car expenses should be limited to the tax free amount allowed by the Inland Revenue which currently stands at 45p per mile which is applicable whatever the size of car engine, because the size of car was a matter for the individual.

9.3 With regard to subsistence allowances, the Panel feel that the subsistence rates should be the same as those paid to the Council's officers. These have not recently been reviewed nationally and the Panel is of the view that the level of subsistence allowances payable to Councillors should remain the same.

Pensions for Councillors

10.1 The Government has previously given Local Authorities the power to admit Councillors to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

10.2 The Regulations require the Members' Allowances Panels to make binding recommendations on which Councillors may be eligible for access to the LGPS.

- 10.3 The independent Panel can make recommendations as to which Members (under 70 years of age) should be entitled to membership of the Scheme and whether the Basic Allowance or the Special Responsibility Allowance or both should be made pensionable.
- 10.4 Our view continues to remain unchanged. We acknowledge that the current level of Basic Allowance might not make membership of the Scheme worthwhile for many Councillors. However, we agree with the principle that all Councillors should be treated equally on this issue. Every opportunity should be taken to encourage individuals to stand as candidates and an enhancement of the overall remuneration package for Councillors will help this aim. We continue to feel, therefore, that the Scheme should be made available to all Councillors who want to take advantage of its benefits. We do not – at this stage – intend to make any change to our previous recommendation, although the situation relating to Pensions for Councillors could well change before the next review of Members' Allowances is undertaken for the reasons set out below.
- 10.5 The Panel was aware that the current Coalition Government had made an announcement before Christmas that it proposed to scrap Pensions for Councillors. If the proposals were introduced, Councillors would not be able to join the scheme after April 2014 and Councillors who were already members would not be able to accrue any further benefits after that date.
- 10.6 This issue would be kept under review by the Panel.

Renunciation

- 11.1 The Panel noted that a Member may, by notice in writing, elect to forgo any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance and associated benefits.

Time Limit

- 12.1 As previously, the Panel recommends that Councillors should submit their allowance claims regularly and we suggest a time limit of six months for backdated claims.

The New Standards Regime

- 13.1 On 30 June 2012, following the coming into effect of the Localism Act, the Standards Committee in its former guise comprising Councillors, independent members and parish representatives was abolished.
- 13.2 The Panel noted that the one of the effects of this was that the allowance that had been paid to the independent members had now ceased.
- 13.3 The Panel took note that since the abolition of the former Committee, the Council had put in place arrangements for a replacement Standards Committee to be formed in accordance with regulations issued by the Government. The Committee would comprise five Councillors from whom the

Chairman would be appointed, two non-voting Parish representatives and three independent non-voting co-optees.

- 13.4 It was also noted that an Independent Person had been appointed to advise the Committee on matters relating to any future complaints against Councillors and that at a Full Council meeting in July 2012, the decision had been taken to pay an annual allowance to the Independent Person equivalent to the sum that had been paid per annum (£500) to the former independent Chairman of the Committee.
- 13.5 The Panel was informed that, to date, the new Standards Committee had yet to meet. Therefore, in the absence of information as to the new Committee's operation and the extent of the responsibilities of the Councillor who would be appointed Chairman, the Panel felt unable to offer any guidance as to whether a Special Responsibility Allowance should be recommended. It also felt that it was also not in a position to comment on whether the amount of allowance the Council had agreed to pay the Independent Person had been set at the correct level.
- 13.6 It was agreed that these matters should be considered again when the Panel met in 12 months time.

Recommendations in full

- 14.1 The Panel therefore submits the following recommendations for consideration by Full Council. A summary of the proposed changes is set out in bold print at paragraph 15.1.
1. The existing Members' Allowance Scheme be discontinued and replaced with the following scheme with effect from 1 April 2013 (The current scheme for 2012/2013 is in brackets).
- | | | |
|--|-----------|---------|
| • Basic Allowance (payable to all Members) | (£4,301) | £4,301 |
| • Leader | (£12,098) | £12,098 |
| • Executive Councillors (7) | (£4,705) | £4,705 |
| • Chairman, Planning Committee | (£4,705) | £4,705 |
| • Chairman, Licensing Committee | (£1,344) | £1,344 |
| • Chairman, Corporate Governance Committee | (£1,344) | £1,344 |
| • Chairman, Corporate Scrutiny Committee | (£2,700) | £3,000 |
| • Chairman, Community Scrutiny Committee | (£2,700) | £3,000 |
| • Chairmen of Task and Finish Groups | | £250 |
| • Independent Person, Standards Committee | | £500 |
| • Mayor | (£8,998) | £8,998 |
| • Deputy Mayor | (£1,644) | £1,644 |
2. (i) Travelling and subsistence allowances shall be payable to Councillors

when incurred by them in the necessary carrying out of those official activities as a Councillor as appear on the list of “approved duties” set out in Appendix A to this report.

- (ii) The mileage rate for cars to be 45p. The rate for motorcycles to be 24p per mile and bicycles to be 20p per mile.
- (iii) Subsistence rates as set out below:-

Breakfast	£6.72
Lunch	£9.24
Tea	£3.64
Evening Meal	£11.44

3. Payment for the care of Councillors’ dependents be increased to the rate of £6.19 per hour (the current National Minimum Wage) and to be in accordance with the following conditions:-

- (a) Councillors shall be reimbursed, up to a specified maximum limit, for costs actually incurred in providing care for any of the following who are at the time part of the claimant’s household living with him/her and who would normally be looked after by him/her, whilst the claimant is undertaking an “approved duty”.
 - i. children under the age of 14;
 - ii. elderly person (aged 60 and over);
 - iii. people with disabilities;
 - iv. people with learning difficulties.
- (b) In addition to living as part of the claimant’s household the dependent must be unable to be left unsupervised by the carer.
- (c) The carer must not be someone who ordinarily lives with the claimant as part of the household.
- (d) For the purposes of (a) above:
 - (i) “approved duty” would be a duty under the Council’s scheme;
 - (ii) the maximum hourly rate repayable should be consistent with the statutory minimum wage
- (e) The claimant must produce a receipt for payments he/she has made to the carer and must sign a certificate which, amongst other things, will state that the costs were properly and necessarily incurred in the course of, or to permit, him/her undertaking his/her duties as a Councillor.

4. (a) No advice on a level of Participation Allowance for Parish Councillors be offered by the Panel until a formal request be received from a

Parish Council;

- (b) Allowances for travelling and subsistence be identical to those payable to Borough Councillors and the same level of such allowances should apply for all Parishes throughout Taunton Deane;
 - (c) Parish Councillors be permitted to seek reimbursement of the actual cost of items used for Parish Council business, such as computer consumables, or a nominal sum, provided such payments were approved by the Parish Council.
5. (a) That all Members of the Council be entitled to be members of the Local Government Pension Scheme;
- (b) Both the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowance be treated as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable.

15.1 Summary of Recommendations

- **No increase to the Basic Allowance;**
- **No increase to Special Responsibility Allowances except that paid to the two Scrutiny Chairmen (proposed £300 per year increase);**
- **No increase in the Mayor or Deputy Mayor Allowance;**
- **To increase the rate paid to carers of Councillor's dependents from £6.08 per hour to £6.19 per hour, to reflect the National Minimum Wage.**

Tony Brown
Chairman
on behalf of the Members' Allowances Panel

Appendix A

Recommended List of Approved Duties

Approved duties for the payment of travelling and subsistence allowances:

- (a) meetings of the Council, the Executive, its Boards, Panels, Committees, Working Parties and sub groups;
- (b) meetings of County Council's committees where the Councillor has been appointed by Taunton Deane as a member or representative;
- (c) any national conference authorised by the Council and involving an overnight stay;
- (d) meetings of other bodies to which the Council make appointments (representatives of the Council on outside bodies);
- (e) the following types of meetings:-
 - briefing meetings convened in The Deane House for members by an officer;
 - Council organised induction/training seminars;
 - agenda setting meetings;
 - meetings on Council business with officers, MPs, VIPs and others holding official positions;
 - Informal Council;
 - civic functions (twinning ceremonies, Britain in Bloom awards, Design Awards, etc);
 - meetings of Parish Councils or Community Associations where the Councillor attends as a representative of the Council (not as a member of the Parish Council or Community Association);
 - meetings within a ward, generated by business with a constituent (any such claims be supported by completion of a form indicating the area of the journey and the nature of the business);
 - site visits by members of the Planning Committee
- (f) such other duties approved by the Council.

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Council Meeting – 16 January 2013

To receive the following recommendations to the Council from the Executive.

(i) Councillor John Williams

(a) Council Tax Base 2013/2014

The Executive has recently considered the Council Tax Base for the Borough and for each Parish for the 2013/2014 financial year.

The Tax Base has to be calculated for each financial year and is used to determine the Band D Council Tax for the year.

In addition to the requirements set out in previous regulations, the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 require the Tax Base to be adjusted to take into account the effect of Council Tax Support discounts awarded under local Council Tax Reduction Schemes and for premiums charged on long-term empty properties.

The Tax Base which has to be set between 1 December and 31 January each year will also be notified to the County Council, the Police Authority, the Fire Authority and to each of the parishes for their own tax setting purposes.

The Council Tax Base is effectively an estimate of the number of Council Tax dwellings in a billing authority's area. The calculation this year also reflects the recently approved changes relating to Class A Exemptions, Class C Exemptions, Long term empty properties premium and removal of Second Homes discount.

In addition, a reduction for the cost of Council Tax Support has been included in the Tax Base. This reduction has the effect of reducing Council Tax income for Taunton Deane and the major precepting authorities. The Government announced in mid-December that this reduction in funding for the "cost" of Council Tax Support should also be attributed to Parish Precepts and Special Expenses.

Within the Provisional Finance Settlement for the Council, the Government has included funding for Council Tax Support that includes a proportion related to Parishes and Special Expenses. It is therefore proposed to pass on a proportion of this funding to Parishes and Special Expenses to reflect their reduction in funding as a result of Council Tax Support, even though there is no legal requirement to do so.

A relevant share of funding has been calculated based on the Tax Base reduction attributable to Council Tax Support in each parish multiplied by their 2012/2013 Band D Charge. This had produced the following funding requirement:-

	£	£
Total Funding within Provisional Settlement		638,270

Less:		
Allocation to Parish and Town Councils	42,260	
Allocation to Unparished Area Budget	6,500	
Relevant Share for Parishes and Unparished Area		48,760
Amount retained by TDBC to offset Council Tax reduction		589,510

The Parishes have been notified of the expected funding allocation and are setting their precepts taking into account this additional allocation.

The non-collection rate (or provision for losses on collection) has been estimated at 1.75%. This is an increase compared to 2012/2013 (1.0%) and reflected increased risks under the local Council Tax Support system, other welfare reforms and continuing wider economic pressures on household incomes.

The recommended Tax Base for 2013/2014 is 37,280.60 Band D Equivalents. This is lower than the Base for 2012/2013 (41,216.39) mainly reflecting the introduction of Council Tax Support discounts within the calculations (-4,314.03).

It is **recommended** that:-

- The calculation of the 2013/14 Council Tax Base for the whole and parts of the area be approved;
- In accordance with the Local Authority (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Taunton Deane Borough Council as its 2013/2014 Tax Base for the whole area for the year shall be **37,280.60** and for the parts of the area listed below shall be:-

Parish Area	Tax Base	Parish Area	Tax Base
Ash Priors	81.46	Neroche	239.15
Ashbrittle	86.74	North Curry	692.23
Bathealton	84.83	Norton Fitzwarren	903.16
Bishops Hull	1,052.00	Nynehead	165.34
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	1,021.90	Oake	317.34
Bradford on Tone	285.01	Otterford	165.11
Burrowbridge	196.21	Pitminster	435.08
Cheddon Fitzpaine	598.80	Ruishton/Thornfalcon	574.63
Chipstable	129.81	Sampfard Arundel	121.94
Churchstanton	342.98	Staplegrove	708.57
Combe Florey	116.50	Stawley	132.17
Comeytrowe	1,967.11	Stoke St Gregory	356.14
Corfe	132.02	Stoke St Mary	198.25
Cotford St Luke	752.62	Taunton	14,115.83
Creech St Michael	937.95	Trull	992.02
Durston	58.64	Wellington	4,290.56
Fitzhead	113.55	Wellington (Without)	293.61
Halse	139.03	West Bagborough	154.78
Hatch Beauchamp	249.16	West Buckland	424.77

Parish Area	Tax Base	Parish Area	Tax Base
Kingston St Mary	424.73	West Hatch	136.11
Langford Budville	225.54	West Monkton	1,077.78
Lydeard St Lawrence/ Tolland	199.03	Wiveliscombe	1,027.90
Milverton	562.51	Grand Total	37,280.60

- (c) The policy to pass on the relevant share of funding to Parishes and the Unparished Area on the basis described above as a result of the Tax Base reduction attributable to Council Tax Support be approved; and
- (d) The authority to approve the Council Tax Base in future years be delegated to the Executive.

(b) Business Rates Retention and the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 for 2013/2014

The Executive has also recently considered a report concerning the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 (NNDR1) for 2013/2014.

This return includes the Estimated Net Rate Yield for 2013/2014, which is to be used for budget setting purposes, and will determine the budget amount for business rates income kept by Taunton Deane Borough Council, Somerset County Council and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority under the new Business Rates Retention system, which is to be introduced in April 2013.

Although the final Business Rates Retention Regulations have not yet been enacted through Parliament, the Government has provided a Return form template to enable billing authorities to prepare the information required.

A provisional NNDR1 has already been returned to the Government and the final form is needed to be returned by 31 January 2013 certified by the Chief Finance Officer. A copy of the final NNDR1 form is attached to these recommendations as an Appendix.

The NNDR1 is essentially the net business rates income forecast for 2013/2014. The forecast takes into account the Rateable Value of the number of hereditaments (business premises) as at 30 September 2012. This provides the Gross Calculated Rate Yield – the total amount of business rates owed by businesses which is then adjusted for Mandatory and Discretionary Reliefs.

The gross yield is then reduced/offset by cost of collection and allowance for bad debts.

A further relevant adjustment relates to Renewable Energy Schemes whereby 100% of business rates yield – for schemes that commence on or after 1 April 2013, or the amount of increase in yield for existing schemes on or after 1 April 2013 – can be retained wholly by the Council. However, for budget purposes in 2013/2014 this is assumed to be nil.

The above calculations provide the Net Rate Yield before transitional arrangements and rate retention.

The key information needed for business rates retention and budget setting is the Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements. This has been estimated at £38,695,316 for 2013/2014.

Under the Business Rates Retention Draft Regulations, as confirmed by a Policy Statement issued by Government, the Net Rate Yield will be shared as follows:-

	%	£
Share paid to Central Government	50	19,347,658
Share retained by Taunton Deane Borough Council	40	15,478,126
Share passed to Somerset County Council	9	3,482,578
Share passed to Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	1	386,953
Net Rate Yield		38,695,316

In accordance with the Provisional Finance Settlement for 2013/2014, a large proportion of the share retained by Taunton Deane will be paid to the Government in the form of a Tariff, to fund a system of tariffs and top ups.

The final amount to be retained by the Council will be in accordance with the Council's Start-up Funding Assessment for 2013/2014, as issued with the Finance Settlement. This will be included in the forthcoming budget setting reports.

It is **recommended** that:-

- a) The attached NNDR1 Return with a Net Rate Yield of £38,695,316 for 2013/2014 excluding transitional arrangements be approved; and
- b) The authority to approve the NNDR1 and Net Rate Yield in future years be delegated to the Executive.

(c) Corporate Business Plan 2013/2014 to 2015/2016

At its last meeting, the Executive considered the development of a three year Corporate Business Plan to replace the Council's Corporate Strategy. A copy of the draft Business Plan is attached to these recommendations.

The Business Plan has been developed after detailed consultation work with Councillors and all political groups and following an external peer review by the Local Government Association (LGA).

The 'Where do we want to be in the future' section of the Business Plan describes the Council's Vision and three Corporate Aims together with the strategic actions required over the next three years to deliver these aims. The actions are deliberately high level and will be interpreted into more detailed and specific work programmes. Many of the actions have been designed to address the issues identified as a result of the LGA's peer review.

The new Vision and three Corporate Aims, are as follows:-

Vision: Taunton Deane is known nationally as a quality place that is growing and developing sustainably, with a vibrant economic, social and cultural environment.

Aim 1: Quality sustainable growth and development;

Aim 2: A vibrant economic environment; and

Aim 3: A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment.

The Corporate Business Plan also includes a 'Transformed Council' section which details three further objectives required to make the Council fit for purpose, address funding pressures and set a long term balanced, sustainable budget. These objectives therefore underpin the Council's ability to achieve the Corporate Aims.

The three objectives under this section are:-

- Achieving financial sustainability;
- Transforming services; and
- Transforming the way we worked.

There are particular areas of work in this section that are seen as early priorities to progress in the next financial year as a matter of urgency. These projects will be further scoped and costed and brought back for Member consideration in the Spring with a request for funding. These four projects are:-

Asset Management – Commissioning a specific piece of work to review how Taunton Deane can use assets more commercially including disposal of poor performing assets and identification of invest to save opportunities.

Accommodation and Customer Access – Commissioning a project to make recommendations on meeting the Council's future accommodation needs, including the future of The Deane House. This work will need to consider customer access and increasing financial pressures.

Streamlined, modern services – Commissioning work to introduce business process re-engineering reviews to a programme of Council services. These reviews should lead to services becoming more customer focussed, streamlined and efficient and should deliver financial savings. The commission should include training to officers in the organisation to allow it to build the skills to roll this out widely across other services.

Marketing and Promotion – Commissioning some work to help develop and deliver a clear marketing strategy for Taunton Deane that defines Taunton's niche and unique selling point.

There is another action within the Business Plan that needs to be progressed as a matter of urgency and is identified as the most critical recommendation from the LGA Peer Review.

This relates to **Service Prioritisation and savings targets** which needs to be approved in early 2013/2014. It is intended to invite the LGA to facilitate a workshop with Members in early 2013 to agree a profile of services with associated budgets that collectively are affordable for the Council in its medium-term financial plan.

This will need to meet the aspirations of Councillors in terms of their service priorities but by necessity will involve a considerable cut in spending in service areas to be affordable over the business plan period. Once a costed service profile has been agreed, this will be reviewed annually and adjusted to take account of the success of other initiatives, such as those listed above.

In the circumstances, it is **recommended** that:-

- (a) The Vision, Corporate Aims and the eleven objectives of the draft Business Plan be endorsed;
- (b) The commitment to prioritise and fund the four projects set out above be approved in principle, on the understanding that further detail will be brought back to Scrutiny and the Executive with full scoping and costs;
- (c) It be agreed that work should proceed in developing a detailed delivery plan to map out how this Business Plan will be delivered. This will be shared with Scrutiny and the Executive; and
- (d) It be also agreed that work should proceed to organise the proposed Local Government Association's facilitated Councillor workshops to develop a costed service profile that will describe how a medium-term balanced budget will be achieved. The final version will need to be approved by Full Council.

(ii) Councillor Mark Edwards

Introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Full Council has previously agreed to progress the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in Taunton Deane and approved a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS) for consultation.

Consultation on the PDCS, which took place during the summer, resulted in approximately 20 responses being received, mostly from developers and agents.

The next stage in the process is to publish a Draft Charging Schedule (DCS), taking account of the comments which have been received. There would be a further opportunity for people to make representations prior to the Schedule being submitted for independent Examination. The CIL could then be adopted, providing a mechanism to collect contributions towards the provision of strategic infrastructure.

The timescale for progressing CIL is now as follows:-

- Publication of Draft Charging Schedule: Friday 1 February 2013;
- Formally approach The Planning Inspectorate with a request for an examination: early-February 2013;
- Period for representations: 1 February – 15 March 2013;
- LDF Steering Group/Portfolio Holder sign-off: w/c 18 March 2013;
- Submission to the Examiner: w/c 25 March 2013;
- Examination: May-June 2013; and

- Adoption: July-August 2013.

As a result of the consultation responses, a number of changes have been incorporated into the Charging Schedule prior to its publication as the 'Draft' that will eventually be submitted for examination. The Executive noted that it was also intended to publish a policy for payment of CIL by instalments. However, the wording of this policy is still being refined.

The proposed CIL rates have been derived from viability assessments that allow for the proportion of affordable housing set out in the adopted Core Strategy (25%). The affordable housing is assumed to be 45% social rent, 15% affordable rent and 40% intermediate. This will provide some reassurance that the introduction of CIL will not put the delivery of affordable housing at risk.

It is **recommended** that the Draft Charging Schedule – a copy of which is attached to these recommendations - and the proposed Charging Zones be approved for public consultation.



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

**NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN 1
NNDR1 2013-14**

Please e-mail to : nndr.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct authority name.

Please check the figures shown in the cells with a blue border and enter your own figures if you disagree with those suggested.

**A provisional version of the form should be returned to the Department for Communities and Local Government by
Monday 7 January 2013**

The final version of this form, including a signed copy, must also be sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government by
Thursday 31 January 2013

Select your local authority's name from this list:

Tameside
Tamworth
Tandridge
Taunton Deane
Teignbridge
Telford and the Wrekin

Check that this is your authority :

Taunton Deane

Check that this is your E Code :

E3333

Local authority contact name :

Telephone number of local authority contact :

Fax number for local authority contact :

E-mail address of local authority contact :

Ver 1.3

1. Number of hereditaments on the rating list on 30 September 2012		3,757
2. Aggregate rateable value on the rating list on 30 September 2012		£ 101,419,865
GROSS CALCULATED RATE YIELD		£
3. Enter line 2 x small business non-domestic rating multiplier (0.462)		46,855,977.63
MANDATORY RELIEFS		
Small business rate relief		£
4. Additional yield generated to finance the small business rate relief scheme		709,531.95
5. Cost of small business rate relief for properties within billing authority area		2,529,606.78
6. Net cost of the small business rate relief (Line 5 minus Line 4)		1,820,074.83
7. Cost of relief to charities		3,200,213.40
8. Cost of relief to Community Amateur Sports Clubs		46,399.84
9. Cost of relief for rural general stores, post offices, public houses, petrol filling stations and food shops		30,757.62
10. Cost of relief for partly occupied premises		0.00
11. Cost of relief for empty premises		890,938.36
12. Total mandatory reliefs (Sum of lines 6 to 11)		5,988,384.05
DISCRETIONARY RELIEFS		
13. Cost of relief to charities		35,187.25
14. Cost of relief to non-profit making bodies		30,760.95
15. Cost of relief to Community Amateur Sports Clubs		0.00
16. Cost of relief for rural general stores, post offices, public houses, petrol filling stations and food shops		7,224.74
17. Cost of relief to other rural businesses		9,451.36
18. Other Section 47 reliefs (Localism Act discounts)		0.00
19. Total discretionary reliefs (Sum of lines 13 to 18)		82,624.30
20. Gross Rate Yield after reliefs (Line 3 minus lines 12 & 19)		40,784,969.28
21. Estimate of 'losses in collection'		239,442.12
22. Allowance for Cost of Collection		163,257.23
23. Special Authority Deductions - City of London Offset		0.00

NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN 1 2013-14		Taunton Deane
Ver 1.3		
Section 2		
Enterprise Zones		
24. Estimated level of discount to be awarded in 2013-14		£ 0.00
25. Estimated value of non-domestic rates in the Enterprise Zone area in 2013-14	0.00	
26. Enterprise Zone baseline	0.00	
27. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14 (Line 25 minus line 26)		0.00
New Development Deals		
28. Estimated value of non-domestic rates in the New Development Deals area in 2013-14	0.00	
29. New Development Deals baseline	0.00	
30. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14 (Line 28 minus line 29)		0.00
Renewable Energy Schemes		
31. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14		0.00
32. Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements and rate retention (Line 20 minus the sum of lines 21 to 23, 27, 30 & 31)		40,382,269.93
Rate retention adjustments		
33. Estimate of the change in rateable value between 1 October 2012 and 30 September 2013		461,416.47
34. Estimate of the change in receipts as a result in the change in rateable value (line 33 times the multiplier)		213,174.41
This equates to a percentage change of	0.45	%
35. Local authority's estimate of adjustment due to appeals		1,900,128.68
36. Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements but after rate retention adjustments (Line 32 plus lines 34 and minus line 35)		38,695,316.00
Section 3		
Transitional arrangements		
37. Addition revenue received because reduction in rates have been deferred	187,786.78	
38. Revenue foregone because increase in rates have been deferred	116,139.50	
39. Net cost of transitional arrangements (Line 38 minus line 37)		-71,647.28
40. Net Rate Yield after transitional arrangements and rate retention (Line 36 minus line 39)		38,766,963.00

NNDR Summary for : Taunton Deane	
These figures show the percentage shares of the NNDR you estimate your authority will collect in 2013-14. They are based on line 36. See the <i>Tier Split</i> tab for full information	
	£
Amount of NNDR to be paid to central government	19,347,658.00
Amount to be retained by Taunton Deane under the rates retention scheme	15,478,126.00
Amount to be passed to Somerset	3,482,578.00
Amount to be passed to Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	386,953.00

Certificate of Chief Financial Officer

I certify that the entries in lines 3, 12, 19, 20, 36, 39 and 40 of this form are the best I can make on the information available to me and that the figures given in lines 1 and 2 used in the calculating the amount shown in lines 36 and 40 are, to the best of my knowledge and belief those shown in the rating list for my authority as at 30 September 2012, subject to any order made before 15 January 2013 under the Local Government Act 1972 implementing boundary changes. I also certify that the authority has made proper arrangements for securing efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the collection of non-domestic rates. I also certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that any amount included as legal costs in line 22 and discretionary relief in line 24 meet the conditions set out in the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013.

Chief Financial Officer :

Date :

TDBC Corporate Business Plan – Contents

(Version 08/1/13)

ANNEX 1

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Foreword

Welcome to our Corporate Business Plan 2013 to 2016.

To be written

Recent Past

Plans for future

Still hold longer term growth ambitions but shift focus in the interim

Challenging financial context the Council is working in and future funding gap

LGA inspection

New Focus

Signed: Leader of the Council & Chief Executive

Purpose of Corporate Business Plan:

The Corporate Business Plan is intended for our staff, councillors, residents and partner organisations.

It sets out our overall vision and aims for the area and how we will deliver these. It also describes our approach to the internal transformation needed to ensure the Council is sustainable, affordable and fit for purpose during a period of greater demand for services but lesser resource to deliver them.

The Corporate Business Plan will form the basis for future budget setting and service delivery.

Taunton Deane Borough – At a Glance

The following section provides the local context of Taunton Deane including issues and challenges particular to the borough. These issues have been considered when setting the future direction within this Business Plan.

Geography

The borough of Taunton Deane is mainly rural with a Population of 110,000, largely concentrated in the County town of Taunton and in Wellington. The borough covers 462 sq km of outstanding landscape, extending from the Somerset Levels along the River Tone, with the Quantock hills to the north and the Blackdown hills to the South.

The main centres of population are Taunton (66,000) and Wellington (13,000). The borough also has major rural centres at Wiveliscombe and Bishops Lydeard and a number of minor rural centres and smaller villages.

Demographics: The age profile of Taunton Deane shows an under-representation in 20-39 year olds compared to the England average but a much higher proportion of over 65s which is expected to increase by a further 69% to 2030. There is also expected to be a big increase in the number of over 90's during the same time period

Health: When compared nationally, we enjoy good standards of health in Taunton Deane, although our average life expectancy is slightly lower than the other Districts. Deprivation is a key factor to health and average life expectancy varies by 10 years (75 to 85) between the most deprived and least deprived wards, with significant differences in prevalence of circulatory diseases, lung cancer and liver disease.

Deprivation: We have one neighbourhood in the most deprived 5% in the country and a further three in the most deprived 10% in the country. Although issues of deprivation are experienced across the Deane, these are concentrated in North Taunton, Taunton East and parts of Wellington.

Economy – residents are well qualified compared to elsewhere in Somerset and nationally. Employment rates are high, although long-term unemployment of young people is high and worsening. Growth areas are currently in private education and health sectors. 39% of the workforce are in the public sector.

Businesses – Two thirds of businesses employ fewer than 5 people. In recent years, the number of business 'births' has decreased whilst business 'deaths' has increased. Since 2009, business deaths outnumber births.

Housing – Average weekly earnings are lower than County and national average, whereas house prices are high meaning that affordability is an issue. 10.7% of households are on our housing register – the highest proportion in Somerset. We currently have nearly 3,500 households on the housing register.

Private Sector Housing – This accounts for around 85% of stock, although an estimated 41% do not meet the Decent Homes Standard and 25% of occupants live in fuel poverty.

Homelessness – We are seeing an increase in the number of people for whom we have an accepted duty of homelessness.

Growth: – we are an identified area for accommodating growth previously through being a Principle Urban Area and then a National Growth Point. Our Core Strategy was found 'sound' and has employment-led plans for 17,000 new homes and 11,900 new jobs by 2028. The main area of growth is Monkton Heathfield and we have a major town centre regeneration programme including a strategic employment site at Firepool and plans to improve Taunton's retail offer. As with other parts of the country, we have struggled recently in our regeneration ambitions due to the challenging economy.

Hinkley C: - The proposed expansion of Hinkley Point nuclear power station is expected to impact on housing with an influx of workers. This will create an opportunity to attract workers and affiliated businesses to locate in Taunton Deane and spend within the local economy. However it will also create an upward pressure on rent levels and a reduction in available supply. This is expected to be exacerbated by the Welfare Reform plans and result in increased homelessness applications and pressure on benefits. We are working with EDF to find solutions to mitigate this.

The Council – At a Glance

Staffing – We employ 568 TDBC staff in total

Councillors – We have 56 councillors with a Conservative administration but no overall control (28 Cons; 23 Lib Dems; 3 Lab; 2 Ind)

Directly provided services - Housing; Environmental Health, Planning, Street Cleansing; Parks and Open Spaces; Economic Development and Project Taunton.

Housing Service - Housing is a significant part of the Council's business with a stock of around 6,000 dwellings, 1,500 garages, shops, meeting halls and land, with an annual capital programme of £5.5m to improve and maintain stock. We have a 30 year self-financing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan as well as General Fund Housing responsibilities such as Housing Options, Private Sector Housing and Enabling.

Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) - We have a large in-house DLO which focuses on street cleansing, building maintenance (especially on our housing stock); grounds maintenance (parks and open spaces); and highways maintenance.

Partnerships - We have a number of established partnerships

- **South West One** which runs services such as: Revenues and Benefits, Customer Services, Finance, HR, Property, Procurement; Design and Print. We have 131 TDBC staff seconded into this organisation.
- **Somerset Waste Partnership** - Waste collection and recycling
- **Tone Leisure** – Charitable Trust managing sports centres, swimming pools and other leisure facilities and providing health development and active lifestyles work in the borough.
- **Somerset County Council (SCC)** - we work closely with SCC and have recently contracted our parking services responsibilities to them. Close partnership working with SCC is vital for work such as Health and Wellbeing, Troubled Families, Customer Access, Deprivation and Planning. It is especially important in realising our growth ambitions with reliance on SCC to support and deliver infrastructure needed to underpin growth, such as improvements to the A358.
- There are a range of other important partnerships, such as the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership; Building Control; South West Audit Partnership

The Taunton Deane Partnership (TDP). The TDP is the strategic partnership for the area that addresses key community issues that require a multi-agency approach. It includes representation from TDBC, the County Council, Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Health and the Voluntary and Community Sector, as well as education and the private sector.

It has an agreed focus of work for 2012/13 of:

- Delivery of Priority Areas Strategy
- Delivery of the Troubled Families agenda for Taunton Deane
- Local Health and Wellbeing focus

Further information on how we will work in partnership in the future with our range of partners is shown at **Appendix A**.

National Direction for Local Government

The Government has made considerable policy changes to the way local government should work. These include Big Society and Localism; Open Public Services; Community Leadership; Community Right to Challenge; plus a raft of other changes from the Localism Act.

There have also been significant changes to local government financing which include substantial funding cuts and the introduction of new incentives for Councils to encourage housing and business growth into their areas. Alongside this has been the introduction of Welfare Reform. These changes introduce opportunities as well as considerable threats, uncertainty and risks. The Council has been considering these in setting and preparing our Business Plan.

Further details of these policy and financing changes are detailed in **Appendix B**. The Financial position is further explained in the 'Finance and capacity' section.

Our Vision for Taunton Deane

“A quality place”

Taunton Deane is known nationally and locally as a quality place that is growing and developing sustainably, with a vibrant economic, social and cultural environment.

Taunton Deane Borough Council recognises the vital role it must play in achieving this vision, and will provide quality services and prioritise resources to enable and facilitate this. This business plan will outline our key strategic priorities. The following business principles and core values underpin and support our vision.

Our key ‘business principles’

Quality Services – ensuring the delivery of accessible, quality services that provide good value for money (either as direct providers or through partnership)

Customer Driven – we will put the needs of our customers at the heart of all that we do

A dynamic organisation – innovative, forward-looking and focussed on results

Environmentally Responsible – we will minimise the environmental impact from our operations

Our Core Values

We have developed a set of four Core Values with staff and Councillors. These reflect our fundamental beliefs as an organisation and guide how we deal with our staff, customers and partners. These are:

Integrity – we will be honest, do what is right and stick to it

Fairness – we will consistently treat everyone as an equal, respecting their individual needs and abilities

Respect – we will always show respect for everyone

Trust – we will show trust and confidence in our staff and customers

High Level Principles

In September 2011, the Council agreed a set of High Level Principles to apply to future ways of working. These covered our approach to Commerciality, Fees and Charges, Capital, Devolving responsibility and other areas. These are shown in **Appendix C**.

Where are we now?

To help with our business planning process we took part in a corporate 'Peer Challenge' exercise in September 2012. This was an external 'health-check' undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the feedback has informed this business plan and our improvement and learning. Some of the key messages from this review are included in the following information.

The good news...

Both the area and the council already enjoy many strengths and qualities that put us in an excellent position to achieve our vision and corporate priorities.

A summary of our key strengths

As an area	As a Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality public realm (e.g. Castle Green) • Good levels of affordable housing are being delivered • A very clean & attractive environment and a great place to live and work • The county town of Taunton is a great strategic location for businesses enjoying geographical advantages • Culture & heritage • A strong independent retail sector and 'local brands' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well regarded council with good officer & Member relationships and well regarded by partners • A positive culture, supportive style of working and good staff morale • A good track record of substantial financial savings and income generation over the past 3 years (£5m) • An ambitious council • Open to new ways of delivering services and partnership-working • Successful internal transformation of the DLO, with significant financial savings • HRA Housing – 30 year business plan with financial 'headroom' to enable investment • A strong cross party political commitment to growth • External Audit results are generally positive with unqualified accounts and Value for Money assessments

The not such good news!

We recognise there are key areas and issues that we must improve

A summary of areas for improvement

The area	The Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing of the borough and commercial engagement at a regional and national level could be strengthened – it is challenging for a smaller council to gain a higher profile nationally • National economic recession has led to fragility in the economic base of Taunton / struggling businesses • Areas of severe deprivation (within Taunton and rural areas) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council's current ambitions currently outstrip revenue & capital resources • Partnership-working is not as well developed and co-ordinated as it could be (eg engagement with the business community, & other public-sector bodies) • Decision-making process is too protracted, and Scrutiny function needs strengthening • Slow progress in developing & implementing an Asset Management Plan • A more commercial mindset needs to be developed across the council

Opportunities and threats

A summary of the key opportunities and threats that may impact on the achievement of our vision and objectives is shown below.

Our priorities and action plans will be designed to exploit these opportunities and deal with the threats.

Opportunities - these could have a positive impact on our objectives

The area	The Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger links between the council's priorities on targeting Deprivation and promoting Growth (eg skills training, increased employment levels & additional income for the local economy) • A clear strategy for delivering more high quality public realm • Hinkley Point - strong demand for high quality housing in Taunton, and other economic & social opportunities (eg for local businesses) • SCC are working in partnership to bring in superfast broadband to rural areas of Somerset including Taunton Deane. They are also working with the LEP to improve transport links on the strategic road network • Businesses are able to make a greater contribution to promoting growth by targeted marketing of the borough and commercial engagement at a regional & national level • Taunton can exploit its strategic location and define its niche & unique selling point to promote inward business investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Customer Access to redefine the way we interact with customers • Better management and rationalisation of council assets (eg council offices) • More modern & efficient ways of working (including 'lean' processes) • Explore new income generation opportunities and embed a more commercial mindset & awareness (benefitting from the learning of the DLO & Housing business experience) • TDBC and Southwest One are committed to promoting partnership development - an important opportunity for TDBC & partners to ensure success for the contract • Exploring new & innovative ways of supporting leadership development, staff skills & competency • Consider 'invest to save' opportunities to obtain service efficiencies, transformation & improvements • Streamline the decision-making process and strengthen the Scrutiny function to enable the council to make difficult decisions • HRA Business Plan has £16m financial 'headroom' to invest in housing

Threats - these could have a negative impact on our objectives

The area	The Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of growth expectations (planned development within Core Strategy) is not guaranteed • Anticipated funding shortfall of over £30m for infrastructure to deliver the growth programme • Non delivery of flood protection schemes • Hinkley Point – threat of increased housing demand & pressure on affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council is facing a serious imminent funding gap (£2.1m by 2015/16) requiring a reduction of its net budget of nearly 25% • The future sustainability of local government in Somerset, with current funding pressures affecting each Council

Where do we want to be in the future?

Our Vision: ‘A quality place’

Taunton Deane is known nationally and locally as a quality place that is growing and developing sustainably, with a vibrant economic, social and cultural environment.

To achieve our vision of ‘a Quality Place’, we have broken this down into three corporate aims.

- Quality sustainable growth and development
- A vibrant economic environment
- A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment

These corporate aims have a number of objectives listed beneath them and a high-level strategic action plan that shows how we will achieve them over the next three years:

Quality sustainable Growth & Development:

Obj 1	Facilitate a significant increase in the number, quality and range of available houses within the Borough, including the highest achievable proportion of affordable housing
Obj 2	Delivering the infrastructure necessary to bring forward development opportunities

Strategic Action Plan: Quality and Sustainable growth and Development

What? (the key activities & projects)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
Quality housing growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the development industry to maximise land supply in sustainable locations • Facilitate delivery of the sustainable urban extensions by close working with the development industry • Support for communities in the delivery of neighbourhood planning • Adoption of the Site Allocations Document 	Annual review 2013 onwards 2012 onwards 2014/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of a five year land supply in sustainable locations across the Borough • Houses being built, Transport / road infrastructure agreed. Employment land being marketed and developed. • Appropriate assistance is provided to communities to allow them to deliver Neighbourhood Plans • Identify sites for a range of housing including Executive housing for which demand is expected to increase
Affordable housing & HRA Social Housing Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Social Housing Development Fund to build new homes for social rent (target 20) • Produce on-going programme of new development to deliver regular stream of new properties to the HRA each year 	July 2014 On-going	Provision of new social housing managed by the Council Increased social housing provision

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore methods by which HRA resources can be maximised to increase investment in new homes • Strategically manage all HRA assets to fully utilise opportunities for new development • Delivery through the Affordable Housing Development Partnership (TDBC & Housing Associations) • Ensure sufficient supply of affordable and suitable private- rented sector housing to meet demand 		<p>Maximum value for money for tenants</p> <p>Increase supply of social housing</p> <p>Annual plan of affordable housing delivery targets reached.</p> <p>Improved conditions of housing stock to ensure affordable decent living conditions for vulnerable households (e.g. thermal efficiency; appropriate adaptations). Initiate projects to tackle empty homes and continue incentives for landlords to let suitable properties in Taunton Deane</p>
<p>Firepool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of infrastructure • Re-focus existing master-plan 	<p>2014</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2014/15</p>	<p>Northern Inner Distribution Road (NIDR) completed providing access to the whole site.</p> <p>Boulevard delivered.</p> <p>Next phase of development takes place</p>
<p>Flood alleviation solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for implementation of agreed solution approved by the Council 	<p>2013</p> <p>Beyond 2014</p>	<p>Plan designed and approved by the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Funding sources investigated and delivery timescale agreed</p>
<p>Public realm improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a programme of events 	<p>2013</p>	<p>Co-ordinated annual events plan in public spaces developed with the Taunton Town Centre Company, other cultural partners and the business community to maximise the potential of new and existing public spaces.</p>
<p>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the CIL process 	<p>2013</p>	<p>An effective and robust CIL process. Maximise income.</p> <p>Ensure key infrastructure is funded and delivered.</p>

A vibrant economic environment	
Obj 3	Improving the perception of Taunton as a regional centre of economic growth and a place to do business – attracting new businesses whilst supporting existing ones
Obj 4	Increasing the economic activity within the Borough including the number and value of jobs

Strategic Action Plan: A vibrant economic environment

What? (the key activities & projects)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
Marketing & promotion of Taunton <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver a clear marketing strategy that defines Taunton’s niche and ‘unique selling point’ Maximise the conversion rate of new business enquiries into actual investment 	2013	Marketing and delivery plan to include attracting inward investment and visitors.
Taunton town centre retail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the changing retail market in Taunton and plan accordingly 	2013	To develop a strategy to meet the retail demand in Taunton and to allocate sites accordingly.
Stimulate inward business investment and growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest resources to enhance our approach to national & regional marketing to attract inward investment Ensuring sufficient employment land is available in locations attractive to businesses Develop relationship and profile with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and its key stakeholders 	2012 2013 2013 2013	Deliver a new inward investment web site. Identify the location of a strategic employment site within the Site Allocations Planning document. Work with Developers to bring forward employment land at Monkton Heathfield. Achieve Enterprise Area status from the LEP
Local business development & support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of business requirements within the Borough Annual plan of targeted support for local business approved. Annual programme of events intended to stimulate networking and local sourcing opportunities 	2013	Better understand of the requirements of local businesses from the Council Provide better targeted support Programme of events tailored to provide required support for businesses

A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment	
We will have a real sense of community in our areas of deprivation and strong partnerships that deliver projects that benefit the community and improve their quality of life.	
Taunton Deane will be highly regarded for its clean, attractive and vibrant street scene with a strong leisure and cultural emphasis.	
Obj 5	Working with partners to encourage strong, informed and active communities
Obj 6	Working with partners to improve the lives of our most vulnerable households
Obj 7	Facilitating and supporting cultural and leisure opportunities
Obj 8	Maintaining clean streets, good quality parks, open spaces and leisure and cultural facilities

Strategic Action Plan: A vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment

What? (the key activities & projects)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
<p>Work with Taunton Deane Partnership (TDP) to deliver key priorities for the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Areas Strategy & action plan • Health & Wellbeing strategy • Troubled Families project 	<p>Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing</p>	<p>Deliver the objectives and outcomes of the Priority Areas Strategy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encourage strong, informed and active communities - improve access to services, information and advice - improve the lives of our most vulnerable households - improve the look and feel of the local area <p>Reduce Health inequalities in Taunton Deane and address agreed health issues such as Active Lifestyles and dealing with Dementia.</p> <p>Work with 182 families over 3 years to improve levels of worklessness, anti-social behaviour and school attendance</p> <p>Improved coordination of public sector working with vulnerable families in Taunton Deane, resulting in reduced cost</p>
<p>Leisure & cultural development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a new swimming pool • Prioritise leisure and cultural provision and support accordingly • Support cultural development through the Taunton Cultural Consortium • Brewhouse development monitored and supported • Co-ordinated Events plan agreed and approved on annual basis 	<p>Summer 2015 Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing 2013</p>	<p>A new Swimming Pool</p> <p>Through partnership working, Taunton is well provided for with leisure and cultural provision and attracts inward investment</p> <p>Maintain the Brewhouse Theatre and support its extension and enhancement</p> <p>The borough will have a reputation for high quality venues and as an easy place to organise events on public open spaces</p>

<p>Street Scene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise and re-focus the programme of work 	<p>2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Street cleansing programme supports Business Plan priorities including the needs of businesses, not only in the town centres but also on adjoining public realm spaces that promote the area as a whole, making it a better place to invest, work and rest. • Public toilet provision and maintenance will also be altered to ensure that the night time economy, including any evening events, is better supported.
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A transformed Council

To enable the Council to successfully deliver the priorities described above, we recognise we have to be more proactive and radical with service and council transformation, and reinvent ourselves in the face of huge financial pressures. We will respond to the looming funding gap through a combination of planned efficiencies, service cuts and service transformation, whilst continuing to provide quality services.

To achieve our vision of 'a Quality Place', we have broken this down into three further objectives for the next three years each having a high-level strategic action plan to show how we will deliver them.

Obj 9	<p>Achieving financial sustainability</p> <p>Looking at new ways of balancing the budget to address our serious financial challenges. We will ensure this business plan works closely with our Medium-Term Financial Plan (3-5 year) aligning council priorities with the resources to deliver these.</p>
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Strategic Action Plan: Achieving financial sustainability

What? (the key activities)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
<p>Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the MTFP regularly to reflect the latest high-level financial forecasts for the Council Refresh MTFP following Member prioritisation review and other changes – report to Corporate Scrutiny 	<p>Feb 2013 On-going</p> <p>Summer 2013 and ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure Members continue to be briefed on the financial forecasts for the Council – across all funds. This will support effective decision-making (for reshaping the organisation) To ensure the financial plans are continually updated to reflect the latest information on Government funding, and financial policy changes being implemented (e.g. localisation of business rates)
<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</p> <p>The Council will safely implement a new Council Tax Reduction Scheme – starting on 1st April 2013</p>	<p>April 13</p>	<p>To implement a new local scheme that meets the Council's aspirations to support the community but within the reduced funding available from Government – thereby protecting the Council's overall financial exposure and risk.</p>
<p>Localisation of Business Rates</p> <p>Undertake financial modelling and risk assessments to determine impact on MTFP and develop appropriate monitoring arrangements</p>	<p>April 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make sure the Council's financial plans adequately reflect the changing world of local government finance. To ensure the Council is prepared for the changes ahead and any system or resourcing changes are actioned.
<p>Business Rates Pooling in Somerset</p> <p>Consider business case and associated governance for Business Rates pooling in Somerset, and make recommendations</p>	<p>Feb 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the Council doesn't miss any opportunity for growth in Business Rates to be kept locally

<p>accordingly. To ensure the financial plans reflect the “most likely” position resulting from pooling in Somerset.</p>		
<p>Welfare Reform To ensure the Council is fully prepared for the forthcoming changes in the Welfare Reform agenda.</p>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the community through the significant changes ahead • To support the staff through the significant period of change – in terms of service delivery and roles. • To ensure all Council services are sighted on the changes ahead and make adequate plans for their services.
<p>Financial Strategy The existing Financial Strategy will need to be completely refreshed to reflect the emerging Business Plan priorities and aspirations. The document will develop once the Council has clarity on priorities and areas for disinvestment. It will reflect:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plans for savings programmes • transformation programmes • policies on level of Reserves • policies on Earmarked Reserves • latest Govt funding arrangements • predicted impact of Welfare Reform on our services and community. • any approved IT Strategy • any approved Asset Management Plans aspirations and priorities • any approved Workforce Development Plan • any approved IDP and associated CIL funding forecasts agreed with the Council and Partners <p>The document will set specific targets to show how the Council will achieve a sustainable budget over the coming 3 years (2014/15 to 2016/17).</p>	July 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the Council has a clear financial strategy to resolve the current forecast budget gaps. • To ensure the Councillors have a clear programme of change and transformation to support the aspirations and priorities of the Business Plan
<p>Asset Management Commission specialist work to review our approach to asset management and explore ‘Invest to save’ opportunities. Implement recommendations from review.</p>	April 2013	<p>To ensure maximum return from council assets. Service efficiencies and improvements obtained. Significant savings made to help address the council’s funding gap.</p>
<p>Strategic procurement Engage with the SW1 Strategic Procurement Service (SPS) to identify opportunities for savings through procurement</p>	Ongoing	Achieve agreed procurement savings targets

Obj 10	Transforming services We are open to new ways of delivering services and recognise we need a radical re-think and review of all Council services. This means: what we do, who does it, how we do it and to what standard, what we should do less of or stop doing altogether
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Strategic Action Plan: Transforming services

What? (the key activities)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
Service Reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To design a programme of service reviews across the organisation to streamline services and reduce inefficiencies, whilst ensuring they remain customer-focussed Implement a programme and monitor progress building savings into the MTFP 	<p>April 2013</p> <p>March 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure we are driving out any inefficiencies – thereby reducing cost. To challenge why we do things To ensure the customer is always considered as part of service design
Prioritisation of services & clarification of aspirations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree a profile of services with associated budgets that collectively are affordable 	<p>April 2013</p>	<p>This will need to meet the aspirations of councillors in terms of their service priorities but by necessity will involve a considerable cut in spending in some service areas to be affordable over the business plan period.</p>
Accommodation and Customer Access Commission a project to make recommendations on meeting the Council's future accommodation needs, including the future of Deane House. This work will need to consider customer access & increasing financial pressures.	<p>Commence April 2013</p>	<p>Improved Customer Access and use of Deane House and other officer based buildings</p>
Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) transformation Continue the agreed transformation plan for the DLO, and consider the potential relocation of the Council's depot	<p>On-going summer 13</p>	<p>Monitoring of planned milestones and successful delivery of transformation programme outcomes. Decision made on depot relocation</p>

Obj 11	Transforming the way we work Although we have a good track record of internal transformation (eg recently with the DLO & Housing services), we recognise that we need to learn from this and do more to transform other service areas
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Strategic Action Plan: Transforming the way we work

What? (the key activities)	When?	Why? (Output & outcomes)
Developing Our Commercial Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing Financial Awareness skills, and a focus on Value for Money (VFM) throughout the organisation to ensure Managers understand their service costs and income (and the sensitivities) 	<p>Dec 13</p>	<p>To ensure managers make decisions that are financially sound.</p> <p>To ensure that "finance" and "vfm" has a higher profile in the organisation.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify best practice in other organisations and bring forward learning & good practice initiatives to TDBC services. Research income generation powers and opportunities progressed by other local authorities. 	<p>May 13</p> <p>May 13</p>	<p>To make sure we are up to date with new initiatives and can learn new ways of bringing a commercial approach to local authority services.</p> <p>To ensure TDBC is aware of all opportunities for charging for services so as to maximise income.</p>
<p>Partnership management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen and exploit existing partnership relationships (SCC, Health, Education, business community, other public sector bodies, parishes & town councils) Review resourcing requirement to provide effective skilled “retained” client functions for core corporate services. Make recommendations to Members re requirement and funding <p>• Continue to develop partnership working with SW1</p>	<p>Feb 13</p>	<p>Better delivery of the objectives of this business plan through closer partnership working</p> <p>To ensure we have the necessary resource level and skills to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively manage our partnership relationships; and provide strategic direction to those services delivered by Partners; provide effective performance management and challenge to Partners on service delivery. <p>Ensure the success of the contract</p>
<p>Learning & development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> leadership & staff development will focus on skills to enable effective service transformation (eg ‘lean processes’, project management, coaching, partnership working) Implement Workforce Plan Exploit transferable learning opportunities (internal services & external partners) Develop robust Councillor appraisals 	<p>Dec 2013</p>	<p>More efficient, customer-focussed and commercially aware staff.</p> <p>The right people, with the right skills in the right place at the right time.</p> <p>Work with Councillors to agree a programme of development (linked with the work on the Member Charter).</p>
<p>A performance-focussed culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective performance & risk management processes Understand the ‘Value for Money’ profile of council services and develop benchmarking 	<p>On-going</p> <p>2013/14</p>	<p>Effective Performance & Risk Management leadership (Managerial & Political) and systems are developed and consistently applied throughout the organisation (Strategic, Programme / Projects, & Operational), enabling informed decisions (ie in allocating resources), service improvements, and ensuring good governance & internal control.</p>
<p>Effective scrutiny and decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current structure and arrangements for decision-making Provide greater focus and support for Scrutiny 	<p>Apr 2014</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline council decision-making A more informed policy steer, with better and sharper decision-making

How are we going to get there?

'A quality place'

To ensure that our vision for 'a quality place' is achieved, we have already developed some key strategies around growth and regeneration, these are:

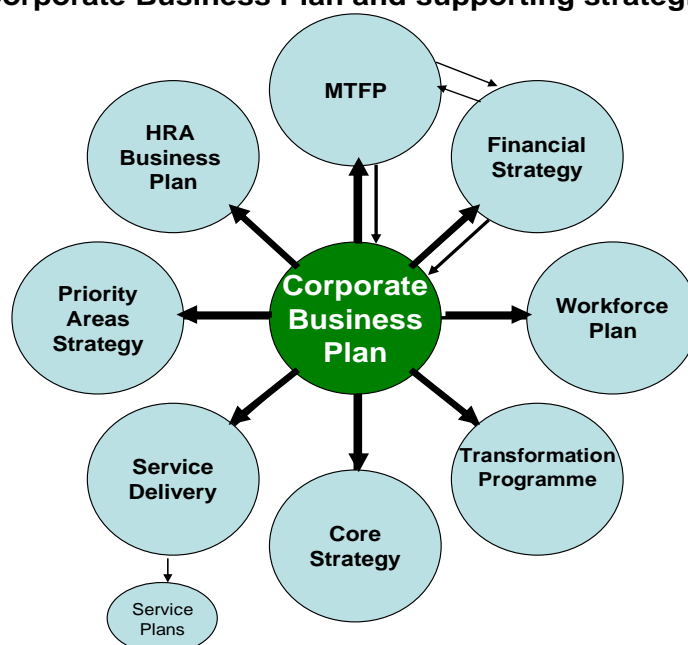
- Core Strategy
- Growth strategic delivery plan (2012 – 2015)
- Priority Areas Strategy

A transformed council

The key documents to help us steer the transformation of council services, the way we work and achieve financial sustainability are:

- Corporate change programme (major projects)
- Workforce Plan (Appendix F)
- Medium-term financial plan (5 years)
- Asset management Plan
- Southwest One five-year plan
- ICT Strategy
- Housing (HRA) Business Plan
- Service Plans

TDBC Corporate Business Plan and supporting strategies / plans



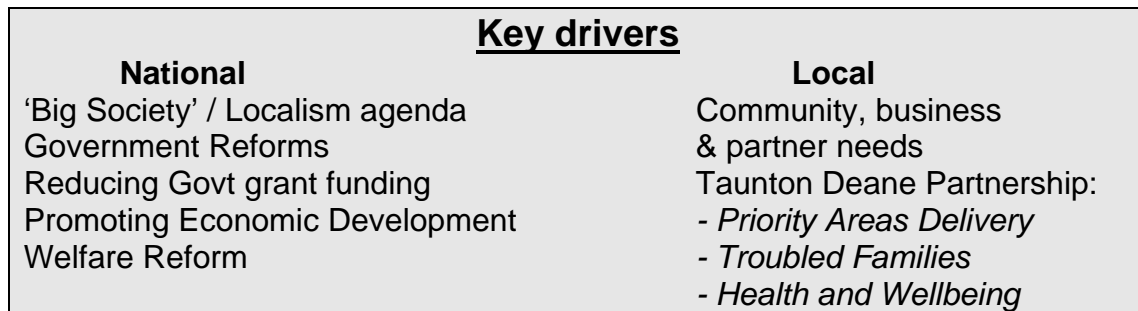
Equalities

We are committed to the promotion of equality and diversity in our communities. An Equalities Impact Assessment for this Business Plan is published on the TDBC website. The Business Plan has been developed at a strategic level – delivery plans will be subsequently developed through service and project planning which will include more detailed Equality Impact Assessments, which will also be published on the website. Further details of our approach to equalities are shown at **Appendix D**.

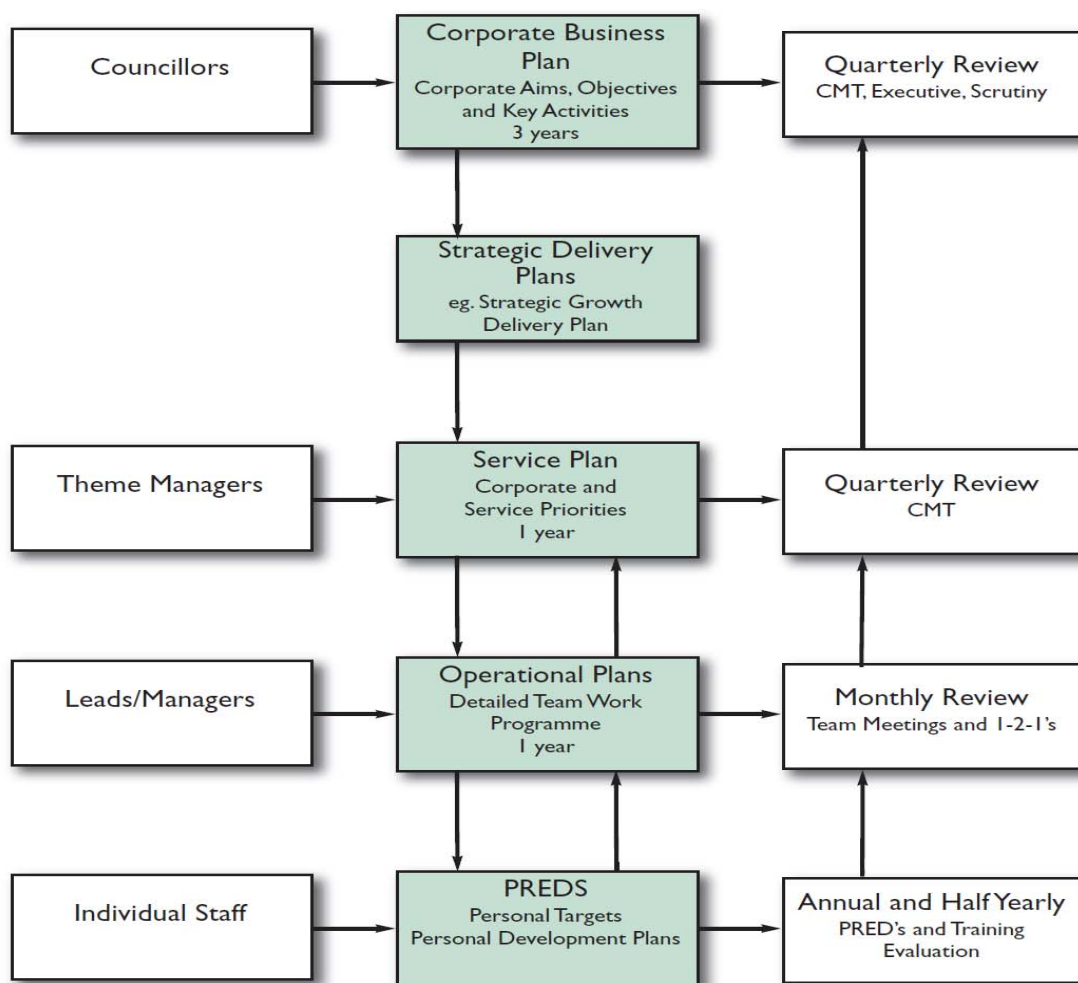
Making sure it happens - managing performance and risk

The Council has robust performance and risk management arrangements in place to ensure the objectives in the Business Plan are delivered and that delivery is properly monitored by Councillors through the appropriate committees.

The Performance Management Framework is shown in the 'Golden Thread' diagram below



The Golden Thread



A more comprehensive overview of the Councils Performance and Risk Management arrangements are shown at **Appendix E**.

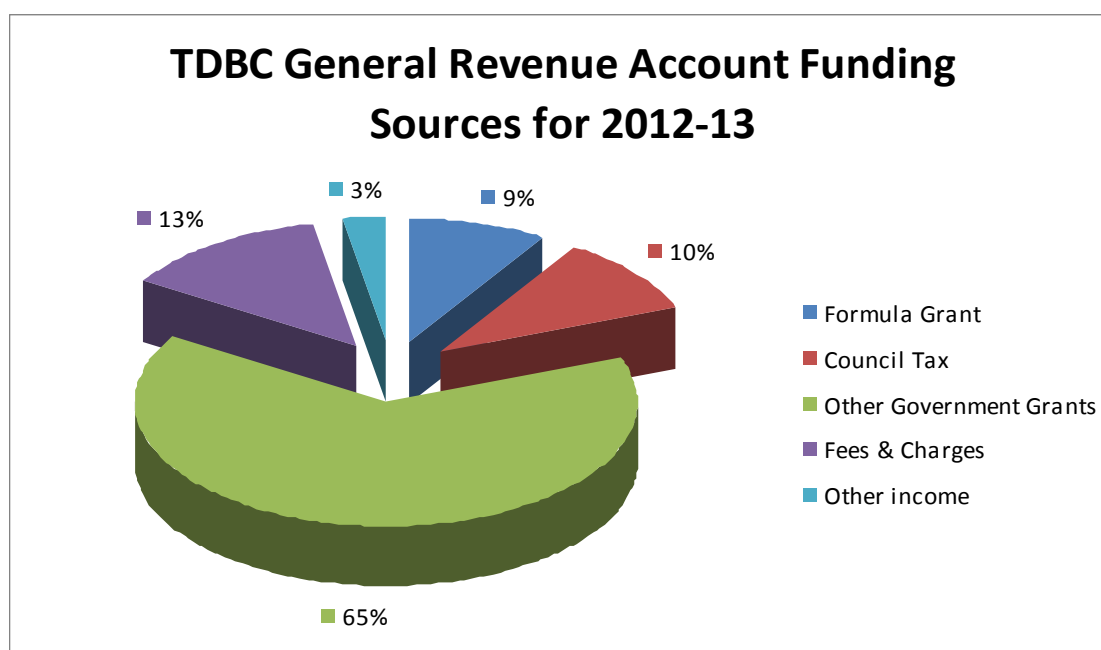
Finance and Capacity

The Council's finances are grouped under General Fund services and also, as a local authority landlord, under Housing Revenue Account (HRA) services. General Fund services are funded through fees, charges, specific and general government grants, and council tax. The HRA is a ring-fenced account which is funded mainly by Rent income from local authority housing tenants.

General Fund

Income – Where does the money come from?

The Council's General Fund currently has an annual income of **£59.7m** which comes from a range of sources shown in the following chart.



Formula Grant - A general funding allocation from government based on need

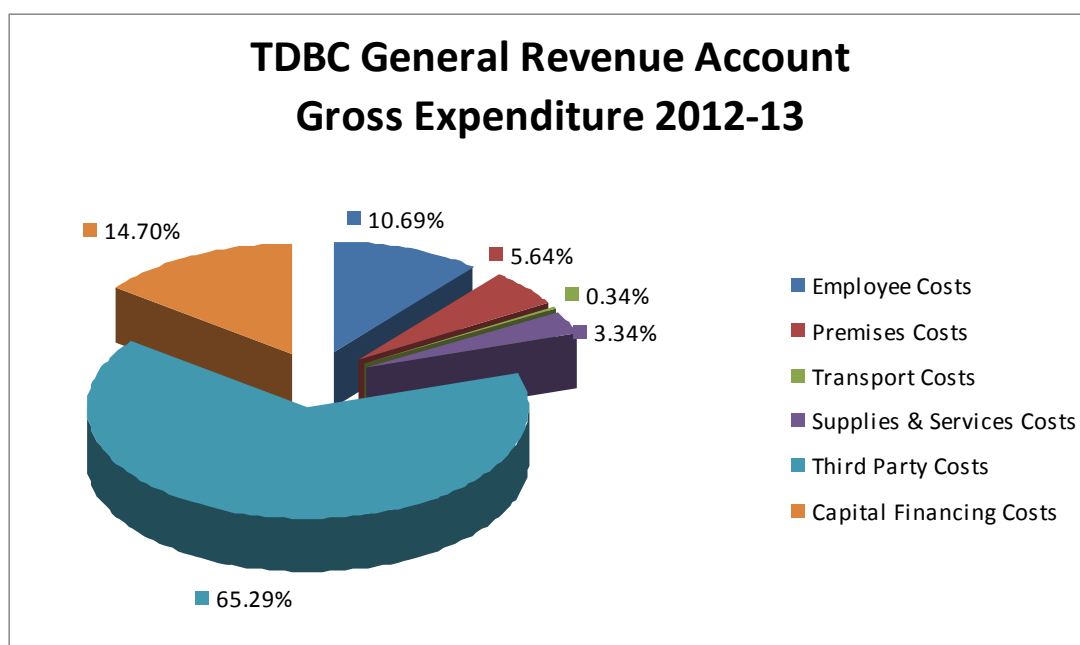
Council Tax - Provides around 10% of the Council's funding. TDBC's Council tax charges have been in the lowest quartile compared to all English Districts for the last 5 years (2012/13 = £136 based on average 'Band D' tax bill)

Other Government Grants - Government subsidy towards Housing Benefits and Council Tax Benefits comprises the vast majority of the 'other government grants' segment above. Other grants and contributions include New Homes Bonus, Supporting People Funding, Council Tax Freeze Grant and other smaller grants

Fees & Charges -The Council generates income through charging for specific services such as car parking, planning, building control, cemeteries and crematorium and garden waste recycling. Some fees are set centrally and some locally.

Expenditure – How is the money spent?

The Council's gross total expenditure in General Fund services is **£59.7m** of which **£13.9m** is net expenditure. This is broken down across the following main areas:



By far the largest area of spend is Benefits paid to local claimants, which is mainly funded by Government subsidy. This accounts for the vast majority of the third party cost segment in the above chart.

The key areas of expenditure (over £1m) on services are:

- Waste collection and recycling - £2.9m
- Regulatory Services (housing standards, pollution reduction; food safety, public conveniences etc) - £2m
- Recreation and Sport (swimming pools and sport centres; outdoor sports and recreation; Sports Development etc) - £1.7m
- Housing Advice, Enabling and Strategy - £1.3m
- Housing Benefits Administration - £1.2m

Other key areas of spend include Corporate and Democratic costs (general costs of running the council); Open Spaces; Economic Development and Regeneration and Street Cleansing.

The Medium Term Financial Plan

The Council prepares a rolling 5-Year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to project the financial position of the Council, taking into account expenditure, income, inflation and funding forecasts, investment plans, and financial risks. The following table provides a summary of the Council's latest MTFP position as at September 2012, which shows an increasing budget gap based on current services levels and currently identified spending pressures.

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k
TDBC Forecast Net Expenditure	11,428	11,843	12,523	12,986	13,400
Forecast Formula Grant	4,917	4,439	4,301	4,301	4,301
Forecast Council Tax	5,740	5,913	6,091	6,275	6,464
Forecast Resources Available	10,657	10,352	10,392	10,576	10,765
Predicted Budget Gap – Cumulative	771	1,491	2,131	2,410	2,635

Since the 2010 Spending Review the financial position of the Council has changed drastically. The government has moved to address the national debt position by reducing funding for public services. The wider implications of the economic climate are also having an impact on demand for services. There are also significant changes to the way local councils are funded, with core funding streams moving to a basis that places a strong emphasis on housing and business growth rather than the current method based on an assessment of need.

The 2010 Spending Review resulted in proposed 28% funding cuts (nationally) to local government over a four year period. In reality, for this Council, general grant funding has been reduced by almost 25% (£1.6m) in the first two years since the Spending Review, and we are currently preparing for a further 20% (£1m) cut over the next two years up to 2014/15. It is uncertain what will happen with funding levels over the longer term but it is generally acknowledged that there is a strong possibility that cuts may continue beyond 2014/15.

Local circumstances indicate there will be additional pressures to budgets through decreasing income (from car parks, building control, licensing, benefits administration, and other areas); increased demand on services (such as benefits) and inflation.

Our MTFP forecast predicts that by the end of the three-year business plan period, the Council will have a budget funding gap of £2.1m per year if it continues to operate at its existing level. This gap will rise to £3.4m by 2020/21 if no action is taken to balance the budget.

The workforce plan

The workforce plan describes how our workforce can anticipate and respond to the demands of the community and the transformation of the Council. It is critical to the success of organisational and cultural change.

The plan take account of the way the authority will develop over the next three years, the changing needs of our communities and the financial pressures the Council will continue to face.

It considers the workforce skills and knowledge we require, our approach to people management and how we will bridge identified skills gaps.

The Workforce Plan can be seen at **Appendix F**.

How can we afford it? Balancing the Budget

The Council faces a real challenge to produce a balanced budget and address the £2.1m projected funding gap over the next three years. A major piece of work that must closely follow this Business Plan is for Councillors to undertake a service prioritisation and financial profiling exercise that explicitly describes which services will be future priorities and which won't. This will need to include significantly reduced service budgets that collectively accounts for the £2.1m gap, thus giving the Council a balanced budget in the medium term. A budget profiling workshop facilitated by the LGA will be organised for early 2013.

An initial financial modelling of services has been undertaken, using ranking of service priorities taken from responses to a Councillor questionnaire in July 2012. This has provided a rudimentary model that shows how service cuts could look in the future if none of the other measures in this section were addressed and if Councillors were unable to develop a more refined prioritisation model. The financial model is attached as **Appendix G**.

Other measures to deliver a sustainable Council and to help deliver the £2.1m budget gap described above, includes:

Reducing Costs and increasing income – The Business Plan has prioritised streamlining services and reducing costs in its 'Transformed Council' section. These include reviewing our asset base and asset management; investing in business process re-engineering; and reviewing Customer Access. It plans to increase income through encouraging its services to become more commercially-minded and seek better income opportunities.

Council Tax - The Council has the option to provide local taxpayers' with a choice to increase tax above a minimum defined by the Secretary of State (the higher of 2% or £5 per Band D household in 2013/14) via a Referendum. Council tax income is currently £5.6m (around 10% of the Council's total income for General Fund services). Each 1% increase generates additional income of around £56k per year.

Government Grant - funding for services will be strongly linked to growth (Business Rates, New Homes Bonus), therefore agreeing priorities that support growth should help to maintain and potentially increase funding.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – this will generate funding to invest in local infrastructure and has the potential to develop into a key funding stream. We have identified around £50m of infrastructure required to deliver planned growth in the Taunton Deane Core Strategy. CIL will partly cover this however there will be a sizeable gap between funding available and cost of infrastructure required. This shortfall will place pressure on identifying other funding sources, such as New Homes Bonus to help bridge the gap.

Fees & Charges – A High Level Principle agreed by Council was that Fees & Charges keep pace with inflation. This income can be volatile and therefore the Council will need to ensure prudent estimates of demand and income are used for financial planning and budgeting.

New Homes Bonus – currently £392k per year of New Homes Bonus grant is included in the annual budget to maintain services. Total income is currently £1m per year (2012/13), and has the potential to increase to £2m-£3m per year if the current housing growth trend continues in Taunton Deane. As this funding resource grows it will become increasingly important for the Council.

Business Rates – Funding from Business Rates is changing from April 2013. We are uncertain what the level of funding will be, however the assumption within the current MTFP is that the baseline level of funding will reduce as the Government achieves its national Treasury targets. The Council's funding will be directly linked to business growth in future. Business decline is a real financial risk that could see funding reduce.

Reserves

The Council has general reserves of £3.1m (September 2012). The minimum agreed reserve balance is currently £1.25m, although the S151 Officer plans to review this minimum balance during 2012/13 in light of the increased financial risks faced by the Council under the localism agenda with a likely increase recommended. The Council still has the opportunity to use 'surplus' reserves to fund 'invest to save' initiatives or to fund one-off key strategic projects that help deliver the business plan.

Capital Investment

The council does not have unallocated capital reserves and government investment in this area is expected to be low. Money to invest in new capital projects will mainly come from capital receipts or borrowing. Borrowing should only take place after a business case has been drawn up and agreed with any ongoing revenue implications fully recognised.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

2012/13 is the first year of operation for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) under the new 'Self Financing' regime introduced under the Localism agenda. The council prepared very well for this change and in February 2012 approved a new **HRA Business Plan** 2012-2042. As a 30-Year plan, this provides a long term perspective on the Housing Service and its priorities.

The HRA is a 'ring-fenced' account that will operate as a 'business' in its own right. All expenditure on HRA services will be funded through income generated within the service – largely from rents on council owned dwellings.

The HRA Business Plan will be subject to an annual review, and contains the following strategic objectives

- Securing a long term future for our housing service
- Tackling deprivation and sustainable community development
- Investing in our housing stock, regeneration and affordable housing
- Climate change

It is important to ensure the Corporate Business Plan and HRA Business Plan priorities are complementary and are interlinked where relevant.

Recent enhancements of the Right to Buy system gives the Council the option to retain a greater proportion of Right to Buy receipts, with an obligation to invest in new affordable housing. The Council will need to consider the impact of such funding streams when deciding its investment priorities.

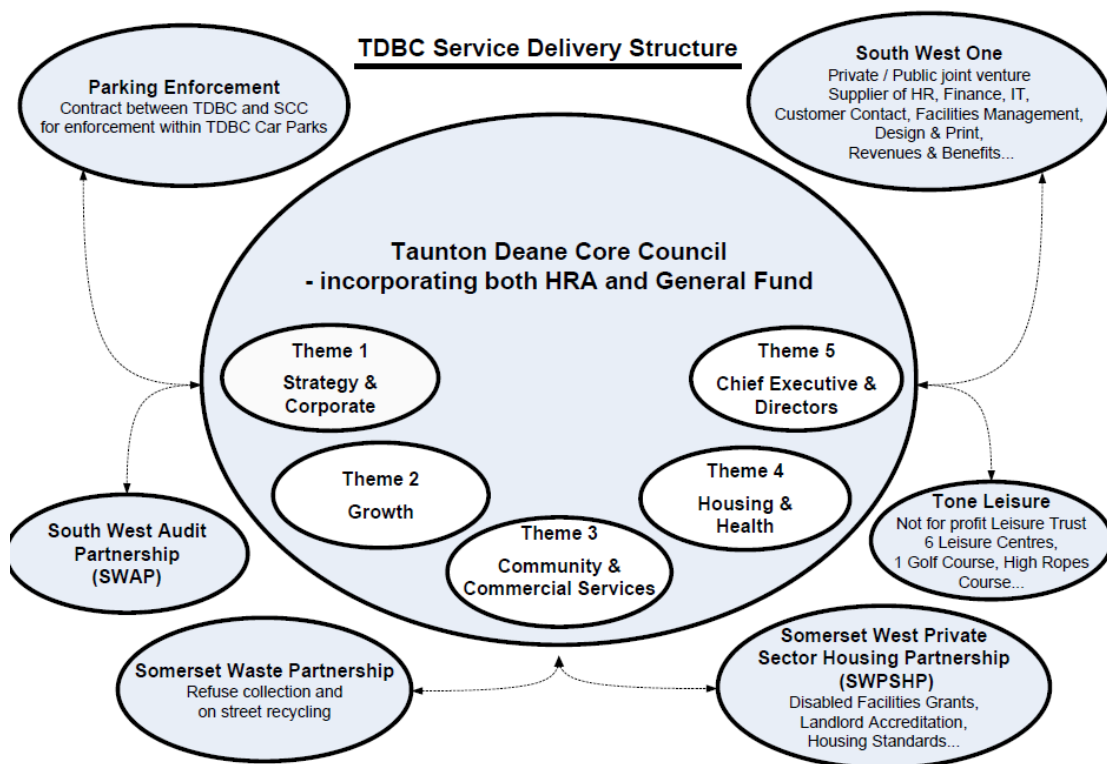
Appendix A: Community and Partnerships

The Council recognises that working in partnership is critical for its future success in meeting the aims of this business plan. Our future working with partnerships will encourage

Community Leadership – we plan to continue to work closely with partners through the Taunton Deane Partnership to take forward work on the Priority Areas Strategy, Troubled Families and Health and Wellbeing.

Service Delivery - We will continue to work with Southwest One to provide back office and support services to 2017, although we need to begin now to plan beyond this period.

We will also continue with other successful service partnerships, some of which are shown in the following diagram of cliented partnerships:



Service Sharing - We will be open to opportunities to share services with suitable partners such as neighbouring local authorities

Open Communication - We will seek the views and input from our partners on our Corporate Business Plan and in future annual reviews.

Appendix B: Government Policy direction for Local Government

The following overview of policy direction from Central Government describe the 'local government landscape' and the responsibilities that we are expected to embrace in our future working:

Big Society and Localism: Empower local people and communities and devolve power down from central government to local government and beyond. Encourage voluntary work and support the voluntary and community sector.

The Council has good links with the parish councils through its parish liaison officer and does not believe there is sufficient appetite from the local communities or parish councils to run services and this is often due to funding, capacity and expertise. However it strongly supports the voluntary and community sector and has a track-record of funding and supporting it.

Open Public Services: To adopt an 'open commissioning ethos'. "actively encouraging new providers, of all sizes and from all sectors, to deliver public services". "We want, where possible, to give people direct control over neighbourhood services directly to communities, or by giving neighbourhood groups democratic control over them" (Open Public Services White Paper)

The Council does not believe there is sufficient appetite within neighbourhoods and local communities to pursue this as a policy

Community Leadership: Provide community leadership, working with partners, the voluntary and community sector, private sector and communities to jointly tackle the real issues that affect them.

The Council has a strong track-record of providing community leadership through its work with the Taunton Deane Partnership and its focus on deprivation through its Priority Areas Strategy. Other good examples include Tone Leisure's work on Healthy Lifestyles; as well as our approach to climate change, affordable housing, broadband and other community priorities. Health and Wellbeing is becoming increasingly important and the Council will lead on this locally, in close liaison with the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Community Right to Challenge: Duty to consider expressions of interest from voluntary and community organisations and parish councils to bid to run council services.

This is a legislative requirement and we will respond to any expressions of interest as required.

Supporting Businesses and Local Economy: The government has made it clear that local government has an important role to play in supporting local businesses and encouraging growth and this is reflected in a range of legislative changes such as the NPPF, business rate retention, the introduction of LEPs, discretionary business rate relief and other measures.

Economic Development has been flagged as a priority for the business plan and we want to embrace and support local businesses and for Taunton Deane to be seen as 'open for business'. The Council has recently adopted a Growth Strategic Delivery Plan that has five objectives around attracting businesses, increasing economic activity, increasing supply of housing, delivering infrastructure and developing cultural and leisure facilities to attract inward investment. We are also actively engaging with the LEP and continue to seek opportunities for regional growth funding for Taunton Deane.

Welfare Reform: Includes the introduction of Universal Credit; caps on housing benefit; localised council tax benefit (with a 10% reduction in overall budget); Replacement of disability living allowance with personal independence payment; an increase to the minimum age (35) for individuals able to claim housing benefit; and a cap on benefits where under-occupation occurs.

These introduce an increased risk to the council through:

- potential increased demand for services e.g. housing advice, homelessness, benefits, etc
- less income through reduced demand for chargeable discretionary services
- increased debt risk and potential reduction in income collection rates

We are currently consulting on changes to our Council Tax Benefit scheme and will monitor changes in demand for services resulting from Welfare Reform. We will respond accordingly.

Changes in Financial Policy

In addition to the Spending Review, there is a lot of change underway that will

- impact on how local councils are funded in future
- influence demand on services
- increase financial and other risks

Business Rates Retention Scheme

Under the Government's Local Government Resource Review the way councils are funded is changing, with the introduction of a new Business Rates Retention scheme from April 2013. This means that local council's will be able to retain a proportion of additional business rates generated through local business growth, but also means the council would receive less funding if business growth stands still or declines. This change will place a strong incentive for local councils to encourage business growth to protect and potentially increase funding levels. The national economic picture indicates that business growth is very low nationally and the 'local context' section showed that business deaths currently outnumber births. Therefore this risk of further funding reductions during this Business Plan period remains high.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The current scheme of Council Tax Benefits, which is fully-funded by central government, is to be replaced with a local scheme from April 2013. The national funding for council tax is being cut by 10%, and in future this council will receive a fixed grant which means this Council, together with other Somerset authorities, will be at risk if the cost of the local scheme exceeds the grant provided.

New Homes Bonus

This grant has been described as “a powerful fiscal incentive for local authorities delivering new housing” (Government Housing Strategy). The amount of grant available will be determined by the number of new houses plus empty homes brought back into use in the Borough. Growth in affordable housing brings additional financial benefit as part of the grant. Enabling housing growth, including growth in affordable housing, will therefore be a key driver in funding growth through this mechanism.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Council is currently consulting on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule which sets out the rates at which CIL will apply and the types of development which will be liable to pay it. The requirement to invest in local infrastructure and the amount of funding generated through CIL, will be fundamentally linked to growth. The amount of funding will therefore be variable and the timing and amounts will be uncertain. Financial plans will need to take into account this risk.

Appendix C: High Level Principles

In September 2011, the Council agreed a set of High Level Principles to apply to future working. These were:

Corporate Priorities – The four existing corporate priorities were still considered relevant and should remain a focus for the Council.

Staff Terms and Conditions – The Council should remain within national terms and conditions and only review those that fall outside of this

Staff Benefits – This identified certain staff benefits which could be reviewed and those which should not be and it prioritised transport related benefits as the initial starting point for review.

Devolving Responsibility – It identified that work was required to understand whether any appetite existed for parish councils to run services, before this agenda would be progressed

Increasing Commerciality – The Council should operate on a more commercial basis and explore setting up a trading company in the longer term

Fees and Charges – Fees and charges should always be increased to match inflation, except under exceptional circumstances. Higher charges should be set where benchmarking shows this is reasonable although we should avoid being the highest chargers in the region.

Capital Strategy – The Council should be clear on its spending priorities and aim to set aside a proportion of capital to invest in capital schemes that provide a revenue return.

Appendix D: Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against because of certain characteristics. These are known as 'protected characteristics' and there are nine in total. They are:

- Age - Disability - Sex - Gender reassignment - Marriage and civil partnership	- Pregnancy and maternity - Race - Religion or Belief - Sexual Orientation
---	---

The Act imposes both a General Duty and two Specific Duties on the Authority.

The General Duty

The General Duty has three strands which are to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The Specific Duties

There are two requirements under the Specific Duties:

1. Publish Information - Sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the equality duty across its functions, including
 - Workforce data
 - Evidence of Equality Impact Analysis
 - Details of data and evidence used considering Equality issues
 - Details of engagement undertaken while considering Equality issues
2. Prepare and publish equality objectives. Our published objectives are:

Objective 1: Councillors will fully consider the equality implications of all decisions that they make.

- a) Ensure that 100% of reports that go to the Council Executive have accompanying Equality Impact Assessments.
- b) Provide equality and diversity awareness training to 100% Councillors on Scrutiny Panels, Planning Committees and Executive
- c) Make sure that 95% of all councillors have received equality and diversity awareness training.

Objective 2: Information about the protected characteristics of our service users should be used in the planning and delivery of services.

a) Service areas will publish profiles every two years which describe the protected characteristics of their service users in order to inform service delivery.

Objective 3: Actions are taken to identify and to reduce or remove any inequalities faced by employees.

a) Ensure 100% of employees are contacted annually to ensure their employee equalities monitoring data is up to date

b) Where cases of bullying and harassment arise, we undertake to consult with staff and trade unions to identify and treat the causes.

Appendix E: Managing Performance and Risk

Performance Management

The Corporate Business Plan provides the overall framework and direction for the Council, and is very important for translating the priorities of the community into objectives for delivery by the Council and its partners.

In addition to the strategic priorities outlined in this Business Plan, each council service (or 'Theme') also has its own plan setting out key objectives, ie the focus of work with performance targets and how progress is measured against them.

To ensure that we make progress in achieving our objectives (strategic, programme/projects, and operational), the Corporate Business Plan and Theme/Service Plans are monitored as follows:

Corporate Performance 'Scorecard'

(published quarterly on the TDBC website)

This is reviewed each quarter by the Corporate Management Team – it allows us to monitor whether we are on track / on budget, and to take corrective action where areas of under-performance are identified.

It is then reported to Councillors (through the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, to the Executive).

NB - The 'scorecard' includes all the key objectives, targets & measures, and includes the following areas of the Council's business:

- Strategic priorities (eg 'Growth & Development')
- Service Delivery
- Managing Finances
- 'Results' Change Programme / Key projects
- Key partnerships (ie Southwest One, Somerset Waste partnership, Tone Leisure)
- Corporate 'health' (eg People/HR issues; Corporate Governance)

Theme/Service Plans & Scorecards

These are 'living' documents that are monitored & reviewed, updated & amended throughout the year by Theme Managers and the Corporate Management Team. They are also used to inform Councillors (ie Portfolio Holders / Shadow Portfolio Holders) and Staff of progress against service objectives & targets.

Staff (individual & team) objectives

All employees are set individual (& team) objectives which links their individual contribution to service delivery aims and the Council's strategic priorities. The Personal Review & Employee Development ('PRED') process is used to monitor progress of employee objectives & development.

Risk Management

We live in an ever changing world and to cope we all manage risk – both in our personal lives and in the business (& public sector) environment. To successfully achieve our goals, we need to accept that risk exists, be realistic, and plan to build the future for Taunton Deane that we desire, rather than

simply hoping that success will occur. We also recognise that if we are to achieve our goals – we cannot try to avoid risk completely.

Our aim is to improve internal control and support better decision-making through a good understanding of risks and the overall risk exposure that exists at a particular time.

Effective risk management helps us manage the business and achieve the objectives outlined in this Business Plan. TDBC has adopted a risk management policy & strategy which describes a systematic application of principles, approach and processes that enable us to identify and assess risks, and then plan and implement responses to those risks.

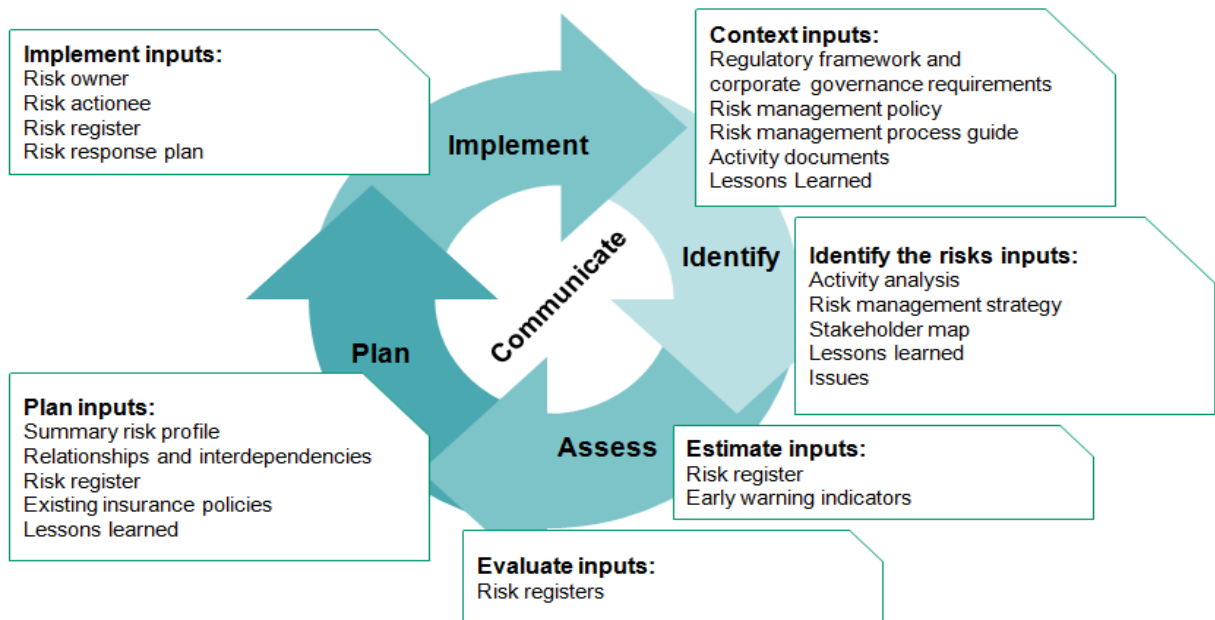
Risk Registers are in place at all levels of the organisation - Strategic, Programme/Project, and Operational. The Corporate Management Team & Theme/Service/Project Managers review these risk registers regularly and the highest risk areas are targeted and escalated for management action at the appropriate level.

The Corporate Governance Committee receives 6-monthly reports on the progress of risk management within the Council.

Diagram summarising the risk management process:

The management of risk process steps

The output of each process step provides most of the inputs to the next process step. The output of the implement step is a Risk progress report.





Taunton Deane Borough Council

Workforce Plan 2013/15

Contents

1. Introduction: What is workforce planning? Why are we doing it?
2. Taunton Deane Profile
3. TDBC – Our Direction and the Future
4. What are the challenges for workforce planning?
5. Addressing the challenges

Foreword

Welcome to our Workforce Development Plan for 2013/15.

This plan predominantly applies to the core council workforce not our secondees in SW One. However, as we approach the second half of the 10 year agreement and as some national initiatives will impact on both core council and SW1, these have been reflected in this Plan.

SW One will have their own workforce plan which combines the whole workforce in that organisation and will be based on their business strategy and current and future workforce needs

To meet the changing needs and demands the people we employ are key to the success of this authority and its partners. We need to ensure that we have “the right people, with the right skills in the right place at the right time” and this plan seeks to address and provide action to ensure that we do this.

1. Introduction:

What is Workforce Planning? Why are we doing it?

Taunton Deane Borough Council's service delivery like any other organisation's is provided through the people it employs. It is vital that we consider our most important asset in our business planning and this plan seeks to provide a framework to address this.

By making people management integral to our strategic thinking we can ensure that we have a workforce that can deliver our changing service needs and it is vital for workforce planning to be truly effective that the Council provides clarity on its priorities and the level of services that it wishes to deliver..

The workforce plan will consider:

- The way the authority will develop over the next three years as a result of government policy drivers, efficiency savings and in response to the kind of Council we want to be and the needs of our community.
- The workforce skills and knowledge we will need to respond effectively to the challenges we face.
- Our current workforce, its makeup, knowledge and current state of health and wellbeing.
- How we will prioritise the people management actions to bridge the identified skills gaps that we have.

It can be seen that this plan cannot exist in isolation; it must become integral to the process of our organisational development. In particular how our workforce can lead and respond to the demands of our

community. This plan must be a fluid document that can respond to changing priorities, as it is critical to the success of organisational and cultural change.

We will continue to develop the plan as circumstances demand and in response to the Council's changing agenda which will mean monitoring the plan and updating an annual programme of actions.

2. Taunton Deane Profile

The Business Plan sets out the local context of Taunton Deane in the 'Taunton Deane Borough – At a Glance' section and therefore this has not been replicated in the Workforce Plan.

In addition to this Workforce Plans often contain significant amounts of statistical data on which decisions have been made. Although this plan uses such data it has not been replicated within the plan itself.

In Workforce Planning decision making we will use:

- the Taunton Deane BC Equalities Information Part 1 – A Profile of Taunton Deane;
- the Quarterly Economic Bulletin;
- ONS data;
- regular staff surveys (eg stress, Travel Plan and Staff Attitudes)
- feedback from initiatives such as 'Peer Review', customer satisfaction surveys and feedback, Audit Reports, Investors in People Standard etc; and from April 2013
- the new Quarterly Staffing Report developed by SW1.

This approach will ensure we are using data consistently within the organisation and not directing additional resources to data collection where this is already undertaken.

Organisational Structure

In 2008 the Council commenced a thorough review of the 'core council' which saw the implementation of Thematic Working to support the priorities of the Council.

The original aim of Core Council Review was to introduce a new structure and new ways of working that would enable the Core Council to:

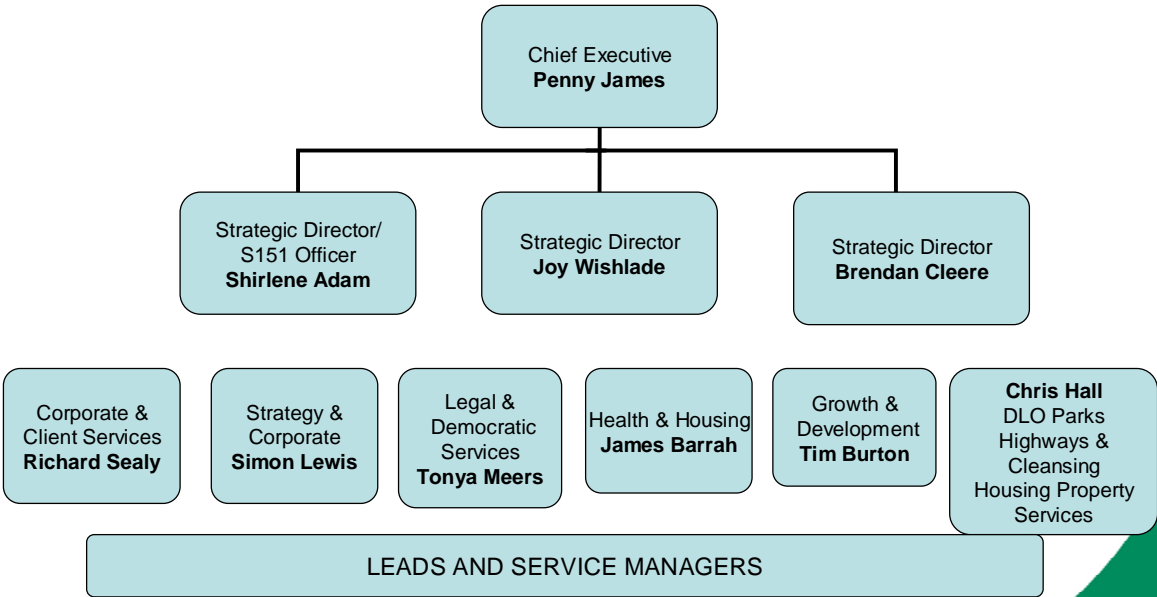
- Be fit for purpose, delivering our vision, widened roles and new ways of working
- Deliver substantial efficiency savings for 2009/10 and beyond.

Proposals for new ways of working and a new structure for the Core Council were approved by Full Council on 17th February 2009 and subsequent reports which concluded with a review of the Corporate Management Team in 2012.

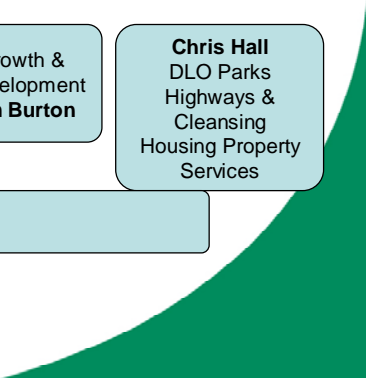
A diagram of the overall Core Council structure is set out below.



CORPORATE MANAGEMENT



11.1.2011



3. TDBC – Our Direction and the Future

To be successful the workforce plan must be able to meet the needs of our known objectives and the changing requirements placed upon local government. The public spending cuts and other initiatives affecting Local government as articulated in the Business Plan will affect the way our services are delivered, however we will still require a workforce that can be recruited, developed and retained to meet and anticipate the changes to come.

This plan is now an integral part of the Business Plan because it is the Council's principle policy document. It establishes the Council's ambitions and the main outcomes it wants to achieve. It also provides an important lead for service planning, resource allocation and budget setting. It also provides the full context in which the Council will operate.

4. What are the Challenges for Workforce Planning?

- Preparing for further cost savings through job reduction and employee costs reduction in a planned way using the current data to assess possible impact; developing redeployment in the organisation as an acceptable option and by undertaking a skills audit;
- Ensuring that the action above is done in support of the Transforming Services actions as set out in the Business Plan;
- Developing capacity in a lean organisation through
 - flexible working,
 - skills training including 'multi-skilling' in the DLO,
 - leadership development,
 - a resourced Business Process Re-engineering, Lean Methodology approach.
 - Re-invigorating Project Management through training and an appropriate methodology;,,
- Developing capacity and providing efficiencies (both financial and non financial) in partnership with West Somerset Council and other organisations;
- Ensuring that any devolvement of responsibilities to parish councils, that may be developed, is consistent with the Business Plan and Workforce Plan
- Developing and retaining talent – in an increasingly threatened, insecure and reward reduced job environment and ensuring that this talent is directed to priority areas. Using coaching to support both management and staff development which can also be used to develop keys areas such as commerciality,
- Managing and planning for an aging workforce ensuring that the organisation uses flexible retirement in an appropriate way and ensures that succession planning is developed;
- Addressing some of the equality imbalances in the workforce and ensuring that appropriate monitoring data is in place; Improving the understanding of managers and staff on their equalities obligations for the organisation and under legislation
- Continuing to reduce absence levels whilst maintaining staff morale and wellbeing – continued action on staff survey results and development of the Employee Assistance Programme to support staff and managers
- Maintaining high level leadership skills in a rapidly moving environment experiencing a radical change to how it provides services either independently or in partnership;
- Developing the PRED processes to support staff in meeting the aims of the organisation and their development whilst supporting managers to address poor performance issues and succession planning issues where these exist;
- Developing processes for knowledge transfer and learning to enable the organisation to benefit (eg commercialism, business support, Business Process Re-engineering, procurement etc)
- Reviewing HR Policies, Communications and Staff Engagement to ensure they are effective and aligned to the Business Plan

and that all managers and employees are clear on the standards of behaviour that the Council expects

- Maintaining focus on Investor in People actions to ensure that processes are aligned to the Business Plan and support employees/managers. Prior to reassessment undertaking a review of the appropriateness of liP against other customer focussed standards;
- Addressing the options for the end of the ten year SW1 contract to ensure that the organisation is appropriately structured to deliver services;
- Managing the impact of legislative changes such as the Localism Act (eg Right to Challenge) and the Welfare Reform Act;

5. Addressing the Challenges

To be developed as the business plan develops to ensure that all actions are linked to priorities of the Council

An integrated approach will also need to be taken with Member Services Development to ensure that the leadership of the Council and community deliverables are aligned. We need to ensure that we are fostering and growing community leadership.

An action plan detailing the key initiatives to support the challenges identified in this report will be needed – possibly referring to other plans and strategies to avoid duplication and encourage simplicity and integration. It is a continuous process under review as the internal and external agenda develops.

“the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time”

Appendix G: Illustrative Modelling of future service budgets required to close Budget Gap if no other measures are undertaken.

	2012/13 Budget £k	2013/14 Estimate £k	2014/15 Estimate £k	2015/16 Estimate £k	3-Year Movement	
					£k	%
Economic Development	428	428	428	428	0	0.0%
Waste and Recycling	2,945	2,945	2,945	2,945	0	0.0%
Housing Standards	829	829	829	829	0	0.0%
Housing Benefits Admin	451	451	451	451	0	0.0%
Planning Policy	383	383	383	383	0	0.0%
Housing Advice	730	730	730	730	0	0.0%
Food Safety	384	384	384	384	0	0.0%
Homelessness	330	330	330	330	0	0.0%
Open Spaces	865	824	786	752	-114	-13.1%
Housing Enabling	385	367	350	335	-51	-13.1%
Development Management	671	639	609	583	-88	-13.1%
Street Cleansing	680	648	618	591	-89	-13.1%
Corporate & Democratic Core	1,423	1,356	1,292	1,236	-187	-13.1%
Housing Strategy	117	112	107	102	-15	-13.1%
Project Taunton	396	377	360	344	-52	-13.1%
Landscape	295	281	268	257	-39	-13.1%
Tone Leisure	758	722	688	659	-100	-13.1%
Health & Safety (Regulatory)	58	55	53	51	-8	-13.1%
Outdoor Sports & Recreation	334	318	303	290	-44	-13.1%
Heritage	283	270	257	246	-37	-13.1%
Tourism & TIC	166	158	150	144	-22	-13.1%
Licensing	23	22	21	20	-3	-13.1%
Private Sector Housing	31	30	28	27	-4	-13.1%
Public Conveniences	281	255	231	210	-71	-25.3%
Sports Development	598	543	492	447	-151	-25.3%
Pollution Reduction	330	299	271	246	-83	-25.3%
Dog Wardens	80	73	66	60	-20	-25.3%
Pest Control	41	38	34	31	-10	-25.3%
Highways & Transport Services	103	93	85	77	-26	-25.3%
Community Safety	223	203	184	167	-57	-25.3%
Community Development	95	86	78	71	-24	-25.3%
Arts & Public Entertainment	172	156	142	128	-44	-25.3%
Building Control	155	141	127	116	-39	-25.3%
Land Charges	19	17	15	14	-5	-25.3%
Shopmobility	77	70	63	57	-19	-25.3%
Voluntary & Community Sector Grants	200	182	165	149	-51	-25.3%
Climate Change	64	58	53	48	-16	-25.3%
Flood Defence	265	241	218	198	-67	-25.3%
Revenues Services	831	755	684	621	-211	-25.3%
Benefits	-136	-142	-148	-153	-17	-12.1%
Parking Services	-2,364	-2,467	-2,564	-2,651	-287	-12.1%
Cemeteries & Crematorium	-598	-624	-649	-671	-73	-12.1%
Allotments	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0	-12.1%
Investment Properties	-59	-62	-64	-67	-7	-12.1%
Non Distributed Costs	141	141	141	141	0	0.0%
Total Service Costs	13,486	12,715	11,995	11,355	-2,131	-15.8%
Budget Gap - Annual		771	720	640		
Budget Gap - Cumulative		771	1,491	2,131		

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Community Infrastructure Levy

Draft Charging Schedule

January 2013

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Draft Charging Schedule

Introduction

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced under the Planning Act 2008 and is defined in the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended 2011). Local authorities in England and Wales can elect to charge CIL on new developments.

CIL takes the form of a charge per square metre of additional floorspace (new build or extensions) and can be charged on most new development. There are exemptions for charitable organisations and affordable housing, together with some size thresholds for non-residential uses. Domestic extensions, together with non-residential development resulting in the creation of less than 100 sq m of net additional floorspace, are not liable for CIL.

The introduction of CIL is seen as necessary in part because, from April 2014, the ability to pool planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), will be restricted. It will therefore become difficult to deliver larger scale items of infrastructure such as schools, swimming pools and transport schemes, where pooling of numerous individual planning contributions is often necessary. Section 106 agreements will continue to be used to deliver some infrastructure (as will Section 278 for highways), but this will largely be restricted to site-specific mitigation and for providing affordable housing.

The money raised through CIL will be used to deliver infrastructure that is needed to support the proposals set out in the Council's Core Strategy and the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan.

Evidence to support the proposed levels of CIL

The evidence to support this Draft Charging Schedule is available on the Council's website at www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil. Other links are given at the end of this document. The viability appraisal to support the proposed charges has been prepared on behalf of the Council by Three Dragons and Peter Brett Associates.

The viability appraisal looks at notional and actual housing development sites in Taunton Deane, and also considers non-residential uses. It recommends rates of CIL that can be charged without putting the majority of development proposed at risk. The evidence indicates that for residential development, CIL would not render the majority of development unviable in most of Taunton Deane. For non-residential uses the only type of development which could support CIL and remain viable, at present, is retailing outside the town centres of Taunton and Wellington.

The Proposed Levy

The Draft Charging Schedule attached has been prepared in accordance with Part 11 of the Town and Country Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). The Council has sought to strike a balance between ensuring appropriate development comes forward and the impact of CIL on development viability. It has also sought to balance costs between aspects of site-specific infrastructure which will continue to be secured through Section 106 planning obligations and those that will be funded through CIL.

The CIL rates proposed are set out in the Draft Charging Schedule. An assessment of the viability of development in different parts of the Borough has been carried out by the Council's consultants to determine what level of CIL could be charged without affecting the viability of most development. The Regulations recognise that the CIL charge may make some development unviable and that CIL should not be set at such a low rate as to ensure that every development remains viable.

Viability evidence suggests that there is no scope to charge CIL on residential development within Taunton town centre and in Wellington (urban area and urban extensions), nor on retail development within Taunton and Wellington town centres. Employment development in the Borough is also not able to support CIL.

Once CIL is adopted, the charging rates proposed will be indexed to account for inflation using a nationally recognised index. The charges will be regularly reviewed to take account of changes in viability, and any proposed changes to the Charging Schedule will be submitted for further examination.

CIL Relief

The CIL Regulations provide for full relief from the CIL charge for any part of a development which is affordable housing (and includes social and affordable rent and shared ownership). Charity landowners will also benefit from relief provided that the development is to be used for charitable purposes. If a development is initially granted CIL relief and then circumstances change, there is a claw-back period of 7 years within which the development will become liable for CIL. Relief can also be given in exceptional circumstances, subject to the Council publishing a policy to this effect. Such exceptional circumstances will only apply where there is a Section 106 planning obligation in place that has costs greater than the chargeable amount and where the addition of CIL would make the development unviable; additionally the amount of relief granted must not be sufficient to qualify as notifiable state aid under EU law.¹ The fact that an application may be unviable is unlikely, in itself, to constitute an exceptional circumstance in terms of the CIL Regulations. However, the Council will give further consideration to what might constitute exceptional circumstances prior to the introduction of CIL and if appropriate will publish a policy covering these.

Payment of CIL

CIL is payable on commencement of development. However, the Council invited views at the Preliminary Draft stage as to whether there should be a policy to allow payment of CIL by instalments. As a result of views received, the Council has now prepared an instalments policy which is being published alongside this Draft Charging Schedule.

¹ The current de minimis threshold is €200,000 (€100,000 for undertakings in the road transport sector) over a rolling three year fiscal period. Community Infrastructure Levy Relief Information document published by CLG.

Relationship between CIL and Section 106 agreements

Provision for Section 106 agreements will remain, but from April 2014, under Regulation 123, the ability to pool contributions from developers via S106 to deliver larger items of infrastructure will be substantially curtailed. The Council's intention is that CIL will be used to deliver larger strategic items with S106 retained only for direct mitigation of site-specific impacts.

Under Regulation 123, the Council will also need to prepare a list setting out the types of infrastructure that it intends to fund through CIL, prior to the adoption of its Charging Schedule. CIL cannot be used as well as Section 106 to deliver the same piece of infrastructure. The Regulation 123 list will be published in advance of the introduction of CIL.

CIL for local communities

It is likely that the Council will be required to pass a proportion of CIL receipts to parish councils for use on infrastructure identified as important by the local community. The Government indicated early in 2013 that this proportion would be set at 25% of the receipts within a community having a neighbourhood plan in place, and a maximum of £100 per household elsewhere.

Next Steps

The CIL Regulations require the Council to carry out two stages of consultation on the proposed CIL Charging Schedule. The Preliminary Draft was the subject of consultation between 29th June and 27th July, 2012.

Taking account of comments received on the Preliminary Draft, the Council is now publishing a Draft Charging Schedule for examination in the summer of 2013. This will be available for people to make representations between 1st February and 15th March. The Draft Charging Schedule, together with the representations received, will then be submitted to the Examiner prior to an examination being held.

Your Views

We would like to receive any comments you may have on the CIL Draft Charging Schedule.

Comments should be put in writing and sent to:

Policy (Planning and Development)
Taunton Deane Borough Council
The Deane House
Belvedere Road
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 1HE

e-mail: talkingtomorrows@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Links

Report to Executive 16th January 2013: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

Report to Executive 20th June 2012: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

CIL Viability Appraisal: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

Taunton Deane Borough Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/irj/go/km/docs/CouncilDocuments/TDBC/Documents/Forward%20Planning/Evidence%20Base/IDP.pdf>

Taunton Deane Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule

This charging schedule has been prepared in accordance with Part 11 of the Town and Country Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended by the 2011 Regulations). It is supported by local evidence regarding infrastructure requirements and the impact of the levy on the viability of development, as set out in the consultants' reports. These can be found on the Council's website as part of the Core Strategy and CIL Evidence Base (see links on previous page).

Levy Rates

The rates below will be charged against the gross internal floor area of:

- All new dwellings
- All other development exceeding 100 sq m in size

Development Uses	Levy (per sq m)
Residential Development in Taunton, including urban extensions	£70
Residential Development in Taunton town centre	£0
Residential Development in Wellington, including urban extensions	£0
Residential Development outside Taunton and Wellington	£125
Retail Development in Taunton and Wellington town centres	£0
Retail development outside Taunton and Wellington town centres	£140
All other development	£0

How the CIL charge will be calculated

In accordance with the Regulations, where applicable the Council will issue a Liability Notice that states the chargeable amount on grant of planning permission or as soon as possible after the grant of planning permission. The Council will calculate the amount of CIL chargeable using the formulae set out in the Regulations.

Full details of the way in which CIL will be calculated, together with an overview of CIL and the full Regulations, can be found on the CLG website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government>.

Taunton Deane Borough Council

At a meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 24 January 2013 at 5.30 pm. (Meeting re-arranged from 22 January 2013)

Present The Mayor (Councillor Hall)
Councillors Mrs Adkins, Beaven, Bishop, Bowrah, Brooks, Cavill, Coles, Denington, D Durdan, Farbahi, Mrs Floyd, Gaines, Hayward, Mrs Hill, Horsley, Hunt, R Lees, Meikle, Morrell, Nottrodt, Ms Palmer, D Reed, Mrs Reed, Gill Slattery, T Slattery, Mrs Smith, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stone, Tooze, Mrs Warmington, Watson, Mrs Waymouth, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp, Williams and Wren

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held on 11 December 2012, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

2. Apologies

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Ms Lisgo) and Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Edwards, A Govier, Mrs Govier, Henley, Mrs Herbert, Miss James, Mrs Lees, Mullins, Prior-Sankey, Ross and P Smith.

3. Declaration of Interests

Councillors Brooks, Prior-Sankey and Mrs Waymouth declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillors Mrs Hill and Mrs Smith declared personal interests as employees of Somerset County Council. Councillor Wren declared personal interests as an employee of Natural England and as Clerk to Milverton Parish Council. Councillor Hayward declared a personal interest as one of the Council's representatives on the Somerset Waste Board. Councillor Nottrodt declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillor Tooze declared a personal interest as an employee of the UK Hydrographic Office. Councillors D Durdan and Stone declared prejudicial interests as Tone Leisure Board representatives. Councillor Gill Slattery declared personal interests as a member of the Board of Governors at Somerset College and a Patron of the Supporters of Taunton Women's Aid. Councillor Farbahi declared a personal interest as a local owner of land in Taunton Deane.

4. Contract Procedure Rules

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Contract Standing Orders which had not been updated since 2006 and therefore did not reflect the current partnership with Southwest One.

An audit carried out by the South West Audit Partnership had recommended changes to the Standing Orders to reflect these changes and to ensure that they were up to date.

The Monitoring Officer had therefore reviewed the procedure rules and had proposed a number of changes which had subsequently been approved by both the Constitutional Sub-Committee and the Corporate Governance Committee.

On the motion of Councillor D Reed, it was

Resolved that the Contract Procedure Rules, as set out in the Appendix A to these Minutes, be approved.

5. **Members' Allowances 2013/2014**

Submitted report previously circulated of the Members' Allowances Panel following its annual review of Members' Allowances. A copy of the report and recommendations had been circulated to all Councillors.

Details of the Members' Allowances Scheme that had been recommended by the independent Panel were submitted. The Panel had once again recommended increases to the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the two Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and had also recommended that the rate paid to carers of Councillor's dependents be increased from £6.08 per hour to £6.19 per hour.

The Panel would be keeping under review the situation relating to the proposal by the coalition Government to scrap Pensions for Councillors and would re-visit whether an allowance should be paid to the Chairman of the new Standards Committee in 12 months time once the extent of the Chairman's responsibilities became clear.

Moved by Councillor Horsley and seconded by Councillor Denington, that the following be agreed:-

Summary of Recommendations

- No increase to the Basic Allowance;
- No increase to Special Responsibility Allowances;
- No increase in the Mayor or Deputy Mayor Allowance;
- To increase the rate paid to carers of Councillor's dependents from £6.08 per hour to £6.19 per hour, to reflect the National Minimum Wage.

The motion was put and was carried.

6. Recommendations to Council from the Executive

(a) Council Tax Base 2013/2014

Consideration had recently been given to the Council Tax Base for the Borough and for each Parish for the 2013/2014 financial year.

The Tax Base had to be calculated for each financial year and was used to determine the Band D Council Tax for the year.

The Council Tax Base was an estimate of the number of Council Tax dwellings in a billing authority's area. The calculation this year also reflected the recently approved changes relating to Class A Exemptions, Class C Exemptions, Long term empty properties premium and removal of Second Homes discount.

In addition, a reduction for the cost of Council Tax Support had been included in the Tax Base as required by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

This reduction had the effect of reducing Council Tax income for Taunton Deane and the major precepting authorities. The Government had announced in mid-December that this reduction in funding for the "cost" of Council Tax Support should also be attributed to Parish Precepts and Special Expenses.

Within the Provisional Finance Settlement for the Council, the Government had included funding for Council Tax Support that included a proportion related to Parishes and Special Expenses. It was therefore proposed to pass on a proportion of this funding to Parishes and Special Expenses to reflect their reduction in funding as a result of Council Tax Support, even though there was no legal requirement to do so.

A relevant share of funding has been calculated based on the Tax Base reduction attributable to Council Tax Support in each parish multiplied by their 2012/2013 Band D Charge. This had produced the following funding requirement:-

	£	£
Total Funding within Provisional Settlement		638,270
Less:		
Allocation to Parish and Town Councils	42,260	
Allocation to Unparished Area Budget	<u>6,500</u>	
Relevant Share for Parishes and Unparished Area		<u>48,760</u>
Amount retained by TDBC to offset Council Tax reduction		<u>589,510</u>

The Parishes had been notified of the expected funding allocation and were setting their precepts taking into account this additional allocation.

The non-collection rate (or provision for losses on collection) had been estimated at 1.75%. This was an increase compared to 2012/2013 (1.0%) and reflected increased risks under the local Council Tax Support system, other welfare reforms and continuing wider economic pressures on household incomes.

The recommended Tax Base for 2013/2014 was 37,280.60 Band D Equivalents. This was lower than the Base for 2012/2013 (41,216.39) mainly reflecting the introduction of Council Tax Support discounts within the calculations (-4,314.03).

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (a) The calculation of the 2013/14 Council Tax Base for the whole and parts of the area be approved;
- (b) In accordance with the Local Authority (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Taunton Deane Borough Council as its 2013/2014 Tax Base for the whole area for the year shall be **37,280.60** and for the parts of the area listed below shall be:-

Parish Area	Tax Base	Parish Area	Tax Base
Ash Priors	81.46	Neroche	239.15
Ashbrittle	86.74	North Curry	692.23
Bathealton	84.83	Norton Fitzwarren	903.16
Bishops Hull	1,052.00	Nynehead	165.34
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	1,021.90	Oake	317.34
Bradford on Tone	285.01	Otterford	165.11
Burrowbridge	196.21	Pitminster	435.08
Cheddon Fitzpaine	598.80	Ruishton/Thornfalcon	574.63
Chipstable	129.81	Sampford Arundel	121.94
Churchstanton	342.98	Staplegrove	708.57
Combe Florey	116.50	Stawley	132.17
Comeytrowe	1,967.11	Stoke St Gregory	356.14
Corfe	132.02	Stoke St Mary	198.25
Cotford St Luke	752.62	Taunton	14,115.83
Creech St Michael	937.95	Trull	992.02
Durston	58.64	Wellington	4,290.56
Fitzhead	113.55	Wellington (Without)	293.61
Halse	139.03	West Bagborough	154.78
Hatch Beauchamp	249.16	West Buckland	424.77
Kingston St Mary	424.73	West Hatch	136.11
Langford Budville	225.54	West Monkton	1,077.78
Lydeard St Lawrence/ Tolland	199.03	Wiveliscombe	1,027.90

Parish Area	Tax Base	Parish Area	Tax Base
Milverton	562.51	Grand Total	37,280.60

(c) The policy to pass on the relevant share of funding to Parishes and the Unparished Area on the basis described above as a result of the Tax Base reduction attributable to Council Tax Support be approved; and

(d) The authority to approve the Council Tax Base in future years be delegated to the Executive.

(b) Business Rates Retention and the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 for 2013/2014

The Executive had also recently considered a report concerning the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 (NNDR1) for 2013/2014.

This return included the Estimated Net Rate Yield for 2013/2014, which was to be used for budget setting purposes, and would determine the budget amount for Business Rates income kept by Taunton Deane Borough Council, Somerset County Council and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority under the new Business Rates Retention system, which was to be introduced in April 2013.

The NNDR1 was essentially the net Business Rates income forecast for 2013/2014. The forecast took into account the Rateable Value of the number of hereditaments (business premises) as at 30 September 2012. This provided the Gross Calculated Rate Yield which was then reduced/offset by the cost of collection and an allowance for bad debts.

A further relevant adjustment related to Renewable Energy Schemes whereby 100% of Business Rates yield – for schemes that commenced on or after 1 April 2013, or the amount of increase in yield for existing schemes on or after 1 April 2013 – could be retained wholly by the Council. However, for budget purposes in 2013/2014 this was assumed to be nil.

These calculations provided the Net Rate Yield before transitional arrangements and rate retention.

The key information needed for Business Rates retention and budget setting was the Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements. This had been estimated at £38,695,316 for 2013/2014.

Under the Business Rates Retention Draft Regulations the Net Rate Yield would be shared as follows:-

	%	£
Share paid to Central Government	50	19,347,658
Share retained by Taunton Deane Borough Council	40	15,478,126
Share passed to Somerset County Council	9	3,482,578

Share passed to Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	1	386,953
Net Rate Yield		38,695,316

In accordance with the Provisional Finance Settlement for 2013/2014, a large proportion of the share retained by Taunton Deane would be paid to the Government in the form of a Tariff, to fund a system of tariffs and top ups.

The final amount to be retained by the Council would be in accordance with the Council's Start-up Funding Assessment for 2013/2014, as issued with the Finance Settlement.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (a) The NNDR1 Return, attached to these minutes as Appendix B, with a Net Rate Yield of £38,695,316 for 2013/2014 excluding transitional arrangements be approved;
- (b) The authority to approve the NNDR1 and Net Rate Yield in future years be delegated to the Executive; and
- (c) Authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer to amend the NNDR1 prior to submission on 31 January 2013, if notice of any further changes to the Regulations by the Government were received that required such amendment.

(c) Corporate Business Plan 2013/2014 to 2015/2016

Consideration of this recommendation was deferred to a future meeting of Full Council.

(d) Introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy in Taunton Deane

Full Council had previously agreed to progress the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in Taunton Deane and had approved a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS) for consultation.

Consultation on the PDCS, which took place during the summer, had resulted in approximately 20 responses being received, mostly from developers and agents.

The next stage in the process was to publish a Draft Charging Schedule (DCS), taking account of the comments which had been received. There would be a further opportunity for people to make representations prior to the Schedule being submitted for independent Examination. The CIL could then be adopted, providing a mechanism to collect contributions towards the provision of strategic infrastructure.

As a result of the consultation responses, a number of changes had been incorporated into the Charging Schedule prior to its publication as the 'Draft'

that would eventually be submitted for examination.

When this matter was considered by the Executive, the intention of publishing a policy for payment of CIL by installments was noted. However, the wording of this policy was still being refined.

The proposed CIL rates had been derived from viability assessments that allowed for the proportion of affordable housing set out in the adopted Core Strategy (25%). The affordable housing was assumed to be 45% social rent, 15% affordable rent and 40% intermediate. This would provide some reassurance that the introduction of CIL would not put the delivery of affordable housing at risk.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (a) The Draft Charging Schedule – a copy of which is attached to these minutes as Appendix C – and the proposed Charging Zones be approved for public consultation; and
- (b) Any technical changes to the Installment Policy be signed off by the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, prior to the consultation commencing.

(The meeting ended at 6.14 p.m.)